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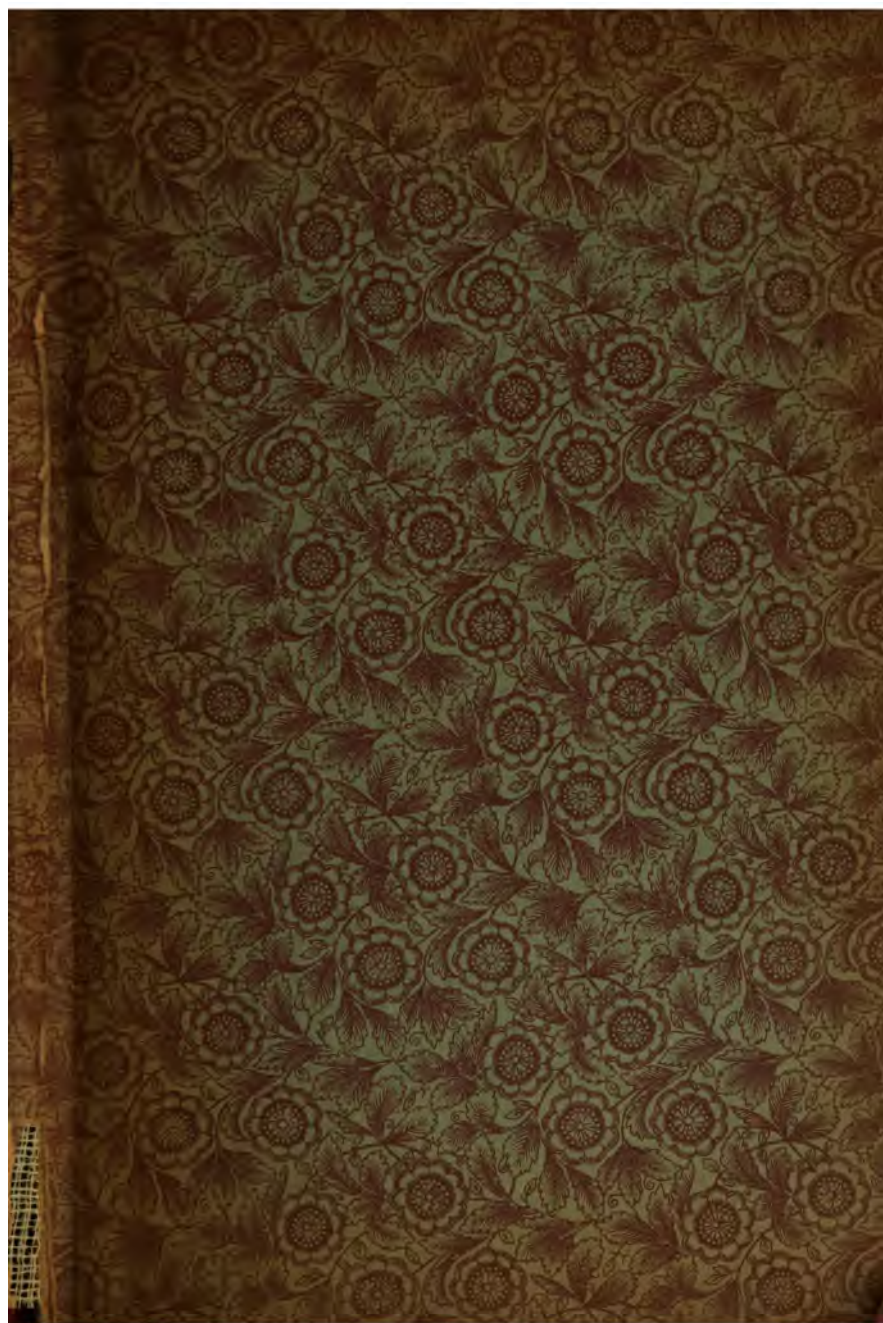
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THOMAS BARBOUR

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OUR NEW ZEALAND
COUSINS

BY

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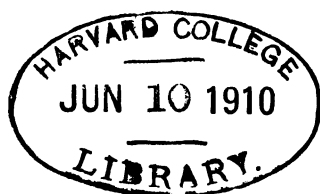
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Gift of
Thomas Carbour

PREFACE.

THE first chapter of this book explains the circumstances under which I undertook the work, and renders a long preface unnecessary.

Being originally written for the Sydney Press, my descriptions, penned as we journeyed, have all the drawbacks incident to hasty composition ; but I have had so many, and so gratifying requests, to have the letters published in book form, by friends, whose good opinion is dear to me, that I feel it would be prudish to refuse. Frankly confessing my shortcomings therefore, I throw myself once more on the merciful consideration of my critics.

Allusions and comparisons, will be found scattered at intervals through the book, which are more peculiarly applicable to Australians, than to the wider circle of readers at home ; but as, I believe, such references may be found to incidentally illustrate phases of Colonial life, and circumstance, I have deemed it on the whole better to retain them.

Mindful of former criticism, I have honestly tried to "prune my style," and curb my natural exuberance of expression ; but alas ! I am conscious

that I have yet much to learn, and that there is great room for improvement in these and other respects.

However, if the reader will accept my pages, as a homely unpretending record of a very delightful trip, through "The Wonderland of the South Pacific," I hope my comments on what we witnessed, and my revelation of the change and progress, effected by twenty years of colonization, may prove both interesting and instructive.

I have tried to describe simply and truthfully what I saw, and what I thought. My most earnest hope is, that what I have written may enkindle in the hearts of our kinsmen in the dear old mother land, who may read this book, a livelier, deeper, and kindlier interest in the fortunes of their loyal and loving Cousins, of Australia and New Zealand.

J. I.

CRAIGO, STRATHFIELD, SYDNEY, N.S.W.

May, 1886.

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OUR NEW ZEALAND COUSINS.



CHAPTER I.

A retrospect—Twenty years ago—A long cherished desire about to receive fulfilment—First glimpse of the Maori coast—Kauri gum—The North Cape—An old whaling station—"The old order changeth"—Rangitoto—Auckland harbour—The city from the sea—Contrasted with Sydney—Queen Street, the chief artery—The water supply—The theatres—Hotels—North Shore—Lake Takapuna—Excellence of the city commissariat.

ONE reads much now-a-days of the progress of colonization. One hears much of the rapid rise of communities, of the quick changes of modern life, and the sudden surprises of contemporary history. It is rare, however, that one is privileged to see for oneself the startling contrasts and pregnant transformations, which have been effected during twenty years of bristling activity and onward progress, in a young country like New Zealand. To endeavour to describe something of these is my aim in these notes of travel.

It is now more than twenty years since I first landed on the shingly beach at Port Lyttelton, in the Canterbury province, and with light pockets and hopeful heart trudged over the high

hill that then barred the city of Christchurch from its port. The great tunnel (monument to the foresight and energy of Mr. Moorhouse, who at that time was superintendent of the province) was then only in course of perforation. In the whole of the New Zealand group, only some nine miles of railways were in working order. It was my fate to travel pretty extensively through the islands then. I visited nearly all the towns of any note, and being young, impressionable, and not unobservant, those early scenes are indelibly fixed in my memory.

When I left India some years ago, after spending some twelve years there as an indigo-planter, an account of which has been given in a former work,¹ my intention was to revisit New Zealand, and compare its present appearance with my recollections of its former state; but hitherto circumstances had prevented my carrying out that intention, until, in the month of March, 1885, I found the opportunity I had so fondly desired, and these notes of travel are the result of my recent wanderings in the scenes of my early experience, and I shall endeavour to make them as interesting and instructive as I can.

The incidents of steamship travel are pretty uniform now-a-days. I could, I daresay, draw a graphic contrast between the old *Mermaid*, clipper ship, for instance, in which I made my

¹ "Sport and Work on the Nepaul Frontier." London: Macmillan and Co., 1878.

first voyage to the antipodes, and the smart, well-found, modern steamer *Manapouri*, one of the magnificent fleet of the Union S.S. Co. of N.Z., with her genial, lovable commander, Captain Logan; but it may be sufficient to say that, having left Sydney with her peerless harbour and sickening smells behind us, after a few days' steaming we sighted Cape Maria early on a Monday morning, and I once more gazed with strangely mingled feelings on "the land of the Maori and the moa," the new Great Britain of the Southern Seas.

Cape Maria is the northernmost point of the mainland of the colony, but it is not the first land sighted by the voyager from Sydney to Auckland. The triple islets named "The Three Kings" lie to the north of Cape Maria, and are the first spot of the Maori domain that catches the eye of the man on the look-out.

Eastward of the cape is a wide, shallow bay, known as Spirit Bay. The coast-line terminates here, in an abrupt solitary conical bluff called Spirit Point. The designation, however, relates not to that mundane medium of seduction which a Scotchman would call "speerits," but owes its name to a legendary belief of the waning Maori race. These dusky warriors hold that the spirits of the departed here congregate, and poise themselves on the dizzy verge, preparatory to taking a final farewell of the shores of their earthly dwelling-place. From this point they wing their flight to the Three Kings above-mentioned, which

are thus the veritable Walhalla of the Maori race. A sacrilegious cynic aboard, remarked, that if a private still were only set to work on the Three Kings, the spirits of a good many more than merely defunct Maories might be expected to muster thick when the roll was called.

Behind Cape Maria stretches a weary, wild sand-drift. We could see the clouds of shifting sand whirling aloft like a mist. The country does not, indeed, look inviting here. It is reputed to be the most barren tract in all New Zealand. Indeed, as the reader will find if he follows me, a suspicion sometimes steals across the mind of the observant traveller that, on the whole, perhaps the fertility of the country has been overrated.

Farther inland a good breed of Herefords has been introduced ; and at North Cape, a few miles to the eastward, many sheep can from the steamer be seen browsing on the scanty pastures.

The chief industry on this part of the island, is the digging for kauri gum by the natives, and by scattered parties of bushmen. The diggers probe in the likely places for the buried deposits of the amber-like gum with long slender spears. In Auckland great warehouses are filled with huge blocks of this unearthed treasure. It looks just like clouded amber, and a lively foreign trade is done with the steamer passengers in trinkets made from it.

The North Cape presents a rugged, scarred, weather-beaten front. It is capped by a thin layer of red earth, and in the precipitous gullies,

a patchy undergrowth of stunted bushes maintains a precarious foothold. In one ravine, the smoke from a bush-fire rolls lazily up in murky columns, till the gale, catching it as it emerges from the shelter of the gully, whirls it abroad, amid the dashing spray and driving rain. Truly a wild, forbidding, tempestuous coast. And what awful tragedies have been enacted here in the grim past! The red earth looks ominous. It suggests bloodshed. I had pictured something greener and fresher-looking. This is not one whit less sombre than the ordinary Australian coast, with its eternal fringe of neutral-tinted eucalyptus scrub.

Rounding the Cape we get under the lee of the island. The steamer glides into a blessed calm, and wan figures begin to emerge from

That seclusion which a cabin grants ;

and soon we sight Stephenson Island, with its isolated masses of upstanding rock jutting out into the sea.

Behind this island lies the harbour of Whangaroa, once a noisy, lawless whaling-station. Only the other day an enormous whale, which had been harpooned in the Bay of Islands, far to the south, was secured by the natives in the harbour, and the sale of the carcase, or rather the products therefrom, realized 1000/. The port is now, however, quiet enough. The old whalers lie idly rotting in Auckland or Hobart harbours. The roving, rollicking Jackey Tars belong to Seamen's Unions now-a-days ; own suburban allotments or steam-

boat shares ; study the law of contracts, and pass in political economy. To "turn in a dead eye" is as defunct an accomplishment as dancing a minuet, and "shiver my timbers" is a phrase of no meaning, in these days of iron ships and steel steamers. Some little timber trade is still done at Whangaroa, and there is a large native settlement, but the roystering days of the whaling industry are gone, never to return.

There are few lights on this part of the New Zealand coast, a lack which badly wants supplying. As I write, there is a gathering of over five hundred natives assembled at Whangarei, another northern port, for the purpose of indulging in one of their famous war-dances. Nothing could more forcibly mark the difference between these latter days and the former order of things, when feasts of human flesh were the accompaniment of these orgies, than the fact that now this gathering is extensively advertised. Steamers are specially put on to make the run, and take up large numbers of curious sightseers, who throng to see the war-dance, as they would to any ordinary exhibition. This may be less romantic from the novel-reader's point of view, but surely it is well that over the old ruthless savagery "Ichabod" should be written. 'Tis pity though, that the lust for fire-water and the vulgar thirst for beer, should all so easily have formed the modern substitute for that fierce craving for human blood, which was wont to rouse the Maori nature to verge of madness.

All the night, on through the darkness our

good steamer glides swiftly along, and at break of day we are almost abreast of the approaches to Auckland, the commercial capital of the North, as Dunedin is of the South.

In the dim misty greyness of early morn we crept past the towering bulk of Rangitoto, the giant sentinel that guards Auckland harbour, and all hands hurried on deck to get the first glimpse of the far-famed panorama of beauty that lay stretched before us. This renowned harbour ranks in order and loveliness among the "most excellent of the earth." "See Naples and die," is an oft quoted saying. Rio has its worshippers. Peerless Sydney has her liege votaries, whose ardent homage naught can quench—and yet, in many respects, Auckland harbour has a beauty of its own, which in some measure exceeds that of any other spot of earth I have yet seen.

Its charm seems to me to lie in its wide diversity, the vastness of its extended embrace. Every charm of landscape blends together into one magnificent whole. Open sea, land-locked bay, deep firth, rocky islet, placid expanse of unruffled deep blue, cloud-capped mountain, wooded height, bosky dell, villa-crowned ridges, and terrace on terrace of massive buildings, all can be seen by a single roving glance from whatever coign of vantage the beholder may command. For league upon league the eye may run down the ever-varying configuration of a beautiful coast, the promontories reflected in the lapping waters of magnificent bays, till far out to seaward the Coromandel headlands lie

shimmering in the sun, crowned with fleecy clouds, and almost hidden in the misty haze of distance.

Out towards the open sea, the watery void is broken up and relieved by lovely mountainous islands, round whose wooded summits the quick changing clouds chase each other in bewildering rapidity; and ever and anon white sails flash across the ken of vision, or trailing lines of black smoke from some swift steamer mar for a moment the clear brilliancy of the azure sky. The cloudless blue of the Australian sky has here given place to the exquisite variety of ever changing hue and form, which gives such animation to the New Zealand landscape, and forms one of the chiefest charms to the visitor from the bigger island.

Yes, Sydney harbour is lovely. But Auckland, with its wider sweep, its greater diversity and bolder features, has a beauty of its own which makes her a not unworthy rival.

In other respects the city presents features which might well be copied by the great metropolis which clusters so thickly on the shores of Port Jackson. For instance, there is here a well-endowed harbour trust, which has a near prospective income of close on half a million per annum, and an agitation has even now been commenced in favour of making the port free in the widest sense. Large reclamations have been and are being made; spacious wharfs run out into deep water. The reclaimed land is let on fifty years' leases. So valuable is it that the trustees get 10% per foot

per annum for the first twenty-five years, and an enhancement upon that of fifty per cent. for the second twenty-five years. A handsome custom-house is now in course of erection. Public baths, well-ordered and cleanly kept, are extensively patronized close by. An enormous building is rapidly going up close to the chief wharf for a further extension of the meat-freezing industry. The sea-line is faced with spacious warehouses and handsome commercial buildings, and, chiefest convenience of all, the railway station is being built within the harbour precincts, and the locomotive and the steamer are within neighbourly hail of each other. Thus there is no waste of time, of power, or of money, in shipping and discharging operations.

The shipping facilities in Sydney are a disgrace to the age, and a reproach to the character of the New South Wales people. The sanitary state of the city is even worse than the state of her wharfs and shipping arrangements. A Harbour Improvement Association has lately been started by private citizens. All honour and good speed to it.

By contrast with the miserable makeshifts and primitive arrangements of Sydney, Auckland rises to the rank of a modern city, while Sydney, by the comparison, sinks to the level of a mediæval fishing village, only she does not even have a decent supply of fish, which Auckland has.

No good is got by burking unpleasant truths. He is a false prophet who only "prophesies smooth things." He is no true journalist or publicist

who cries "Peace, peace," when there is no peace.

What has been done in Auckland could be almost infinitely outdone by Sydney with her greater wealth and wider commerce. A trust established in Sydney for the same purposes as the one in Auckland, would in a few years be enormously wealthy, and the reputation of the port, and the public convenience would be a millionfold enhanced. The vested interests of a selfish few, into whose hands the beautiful foreshores of the harbour have been allowed to fall, and who will do nothing whatever to move in accordance with the spirit of the times, cannot for ever be allowed to bar the way of national progress.

Queen Street is the chief artery of Auckland. It runs up a natural valley somewhat after the manner of Pitt Street, Sydney, only the street is much wider, and now that a Building Act is in operation, very handsome structures are rising on every hand. Evidences of the old *régime* are yet apparent in very unsightly ramshackle verandahs here and there. I observe several necessary conveniences for pedestrians at modest intervals. Here again the Maori city scores a point against the metropolis of New South Wales.

During our visit a gum warehouse and bedding factory took fire. Such is the splendid nature of the water supply, and the efficiency of the fire brigades, that in less than thirty minutes from the first clanging of the great bells the fire was extinct. Bell towers are a prominent feature in

all New Zealand towns, and where wooden houses are the rule, fires, of course, are very frequent.

The magnificent jets of water paled into puny insignificance the dribbling gouts of our intermittent Sydney supply, and in Auckland the painful "clank, clank" of the pumps is never heard when the fire-fiend has to be battled with.

There are two capital, commodious theatres. We went to hear Remenyi, the famous Hungarian violinist. The Governor, and Mayor, and councillors were there. Ostrich feathers seemed the leading feature in the head-dresses of the ladies. Gigantic structures of the Queen Anne era were surmounted by a panoply of feathers that would have turned a fashionable undertaker green with envy. These kept nodding time to the magic sweetness evoked by the gifted violinist; and the effect was really ludicrous in the extreme.

One Herr Himmel sang a ballad. The deep German gutturals rang through the building with an unmistakable Teutonic twang. A corpulent civic dignitary sitting behind us, turned to his beplumed dowager, and asked very audibly,—

"What's that, Mariar? Is that Hitalian?"

"Lor no, dear; that's French," said Maria. Foreign critics say the English are wofully deficient in modern languages. Perhaps so!

Banks are numerous. The buildings fine. But the hotels are legion. And yet it is noticeable how many passers-by wear the blue ribbon. When I say hotels, I err. Public-houses or drink-shops there are in abundance, but the *bonâ-fide* first-class

family hotels, might be counted on the fingers of a one-armed soldier.

Oram's hotel is comfortable, clean, quiet, and the host is obliging, and looks personally after the welfare of his guests. It is a favourite house with passengers waiting for the San Francisco steamer, and tourists generally.

Let no visitor to Auckland omit a trip to North Shore, and a drive out to Lake Takapuna. The scenery will amply repay the trouble, although in the endeavour to reach the lake may be included a jolting vehicle, a larrikin driver, a pair of jibbing horses, necessitating a walk up every incline over rough scoriæ or through blinding dust. Truth compels me to add that this was the only occasion on which I saw a badly-horsed conveyance round about Auckland. As a rule, the visitor will mark with delight the grandly developed, robust, well-fed horses. The trams are served by splendid animals. The strain is not that of the fast but slender weeds which are so common about Sydney. The breed is a mixture of the Suffolk Punch, the Clydesdale, the Cleveland, with a good dash of the thoroughbred, and they appear to be generously fed. In the old war times the Commissariat got down the very finest stock procurable from Tasmania and New South Wales, paying 200*l.* and even 300*l.* for a good mare. They bred for work and usefulness in these olden times, not for short races and gambling handicaps, and the result is seen now in the magnificent chargers and sleek Samsons which one sees in every conveyance.

But to return to the North Shore. The beauties of land and sea are here displayed with a lavishness and variety that fairly exceed my powers of description. The houses (many of them exceedingly pretty villas) are all wooden. Bricks are scarce and dear; blue stone of a volcanic origin and more than granite hardness is much used in the larger public buildings in town. There are few gardens, and what there are, are scantily supplied with flowers.

Fruit is abundant all through the North Island. The apples are really fine, grapes are choice, pears exquisite; plums luxuriate; oranges do not thrive; yet tons of fruit are imported from Tasmania, to the exclusion of the home-grown crops. Growers here say it does not pay for carriage to put up the produce of their orchards. Apples in the city are 4*d.* or 5*d.* per lb., and yet in the Waikato district pigs are fed with tons upon tons of the finest varieties. How is this? Is it not a complaint in Sydney also? Dear fruit in the midst of abundance? Here is a problem the solution of which might well attract the philanthropists of our little Peddlingtons. Nay, the question after all is a serious one, and worthy of the best solution the best minds of our community can bring to it. Freights along the coast for one thing are excessive in N.Z. Other means of communication and conveyance are scanty, precarious, and expensive.

Surely co-operation might work some reform. The profits that will alone content the "middle

man" are out of all proportion to the benefits he confers on the patient consumer. It is high time Australians awaked out of their apathy as regards their fruit trade.

So, too, with fish supplies. Schnapper here (I am speaking of Auckland) can be caught, down by the Thames estuaries and bays, in thousands; delicious flounders and flatfish abound, mullet teem, other kinds swarm. And yet it is either a famine or a feast. At times none can be had. Wellington, I am told, is the best supplied with fish of any city in Australasia, and the fishmonger's shop and the fisherman's calling are recognized as being of equal importance with the butcher's or baker's. Room surely for a new departure in our fish supply.

Butcher meat, too, as I am on gastronomic topics, demands a word. The beef and mutton in Auckland are delicious. Immeasurably superior to the supplies common to Sydney—and the sausages! My mouth waters yet as I recall their succulent juiciness and exquisite flavour. The ordinary Australian sausage is a B.M.—a bag of mystery—so long as there is plenty of thyme and sage; it matters not how old, how black, how dry, and how unsavoury the other ingredients may be.

The butchers' shops in Auckland are better than anything of the kind I had yet seen in the colonies, and it should be remembered, too, that the climate is more favourable to the trade than the sweltering heat of New South Wales.

The shops are lofty, well ventilated, and scru-

pulously clean. All interior arrangements of hooks, blocks, and gear have been evidently specially designed to suit the requirements of the meat trade. The chief and crowning excellence, however, which is well worthy of record for Sydney readers, was this. All the walls were inlaid with glazed encaustic tiles. The counters were cool marble slabs. The windows were furnished with porcelain plates, and the whole looked so temptingly clean and cool that I could not help wishing some of our Sydney "knights of the cleaver" would take a lesson, and be fired with a noble emulation to even outvie the Auckland butchers in obeying the dictates of common sense and the instincts of cleanliness.

But to get once more back to the North Shore. Lake Takapuna is a lovely circular sheet, evidently the crater of an extinct volcano. The black rugged masses of scoriæ all around leave no doubt as to its volcanic antecedents. There are a few tame swans on the lake. Lovely ferns, orchids, and the crimson flowering pohutaukua, or Christmas bush of New Zealand, fringe the steep banks, and the scene is one of perfect loveliness. The Maoris tell the legend that as Tahapuna sank and filled with water, so Rangitoto, the steep mountain in the bay, arose. The energy and enterprise of the Aucklanders are here well exemplified in the use they make of the telephone. They have carried it across the harbour in submarine pipes, and a lady on North Shore can order her groceries and joints in town without going more than a few steps.

Terrific gales occasionally rage here. We saw the devastating traces of one such, in myriads of half-prostrate young pine-trees. The sides which had been exposed to the gale were withered and shrivelled as if smitten by fire. Pines have been very extensively planted all round Auckland. They form quite a feature in the scenery, and seem to thrive luxuriantly in the volcanic soil. So, alas, do briars and the Scotch whins or furze, which some enthusiastic idiot has at some former time introduced from a mistaken sentiment of patriotism.

The furze, with its aggressive spikes and golden blossom, is becoming ubiquitous all over New Zealand, and promises to become as great a nuisance, in its way, as the briars of the west, or the prickly pear of the north, are in New South Wales.

CHAPTER II.

Auckland continued—Mount Eden the chief lion—View from the mountain—Conveyances—Start for the hot lakes—Railways—The Waikato Hills—The ubiquitous manouka scrub—Wayside villages—A Maori belle—The village market—Arrive at Cambridge, the present terminus.

MOUNT EDEN is of course the lion of Auckland, after the harbour, but next to these, the most conspicuous features in the suburbs, to the stranger at all events, are the wooden houses, the hawthorn hedges, and the stone walls made of the scoriæ blocks, which bestrew the ground so thickly. These stone walls remind one of an upland Scottish or Irish parish, and the resemblance is strengthened in places by the appearance of a sod wall surmounted by a prickly furze hedging. The ascent up Mount Eden is very steep. A few clumps of pines have been planted here and there, and relieve the nakedness of the hill. When near the summit, you get a view of the deep circular crater, with its *débris* of loose boulders in the centre. Cows graze peacefully now in the still basin; and nursemaids, babies, mashers, and maidens, and all the modern medley of tourists munch their apples, display their fashions, or sweep

the horizon with field-glasses, from the terraces erstwhile occupied by cannibals. Here and there a heap of glistening white pipi shells marks the spot where the tattooed warriors, when "long pig" was scarce, regaled themselves on the shell-fish, laboriously carried up the mount, from the adjacent shores by the comely dark-skinned women, in the brief intervals of peace between the tribes.

The scene from Mount Eden is surely unique in its diverse beauty and grandeur. Here may be seen at one glance, the tide at its flow on the eastern shore—laving the rugged fringe of Rangitoto, the bold bluffs of the north shore, and the terraced sweep of the mainland—and lapping lazily the massive timbers of the wharves, where the big ships and steamers are busy discharging their multifarious cargo. On the western side the tide is at the same identical moment receding through the tortuous channels of Manukau harbour, leaving the broad mud flats, with their rocky environment, reeking and steaming—bare, black, and ugly—under the rays of the afternoon sun. The suburbs glow with beauty, as the light gleams on bright roofs, snug gardens, young plantations, and dark green masses of pine and cedar. The domain below, with its wild entanglement of natural bush, fern-trees and dark undergrowth, looks cosy, cool, and refreshing; everywhere is the glint of water, relieving the tumbled masses of scoræ, the circling outlines of extinct volcanoes, and fortuitous jumble of buildings. The background is filled in by bold outlines of ragged peak

and crested hill, amid the recesses of which, masses of bush and forest show as great black patches ; and the cloudlets trail, like the shreds of a great veil, which the merry western breeze has torn and riven to tatters.

As one withdraws the eye from the marvellously diversified panorama of loveliness, and looks into the yawning barren ugliness of the burnt-up focus of bygone fire at his feet, the abrupt transition is one of those rare experiences which form a landmark in memory, and the scene is imprinted with photographic fidelity on the recollection, never again to be effaced.

Cab fares are absurdly high in Auckland. Five shillings an hour is rather too much to pay for the luxury of being jostled about in a vehicle, which, whatever the horse may be, is decidedly inferior in comfort and cleanliness to an average Sydney cab.

"The nimble sixpence" is thought more of here than in Sydney. Children will even accept a penny with an approach to gratitude, and not spurn it with the supercilious scorn of a Sydney *gamin*. Street porters, each with his hand lorry, wait at the corners of the streets to transport parcels or baggage, and I found them a decided convenience—civil in their conversation, and reasonable in their charges. If you want your luggage taken to the steamer, samples taken round to a customer, or any little carrying job done, one of these porters will save you the expense of a cab or van, and this class might well be introduced into

Sydney. Street *commissionaires* would be well patronized, and the municipality might take the hint and issue licences. The horse trams are much patronized, and are, in my humble opinion, infinitely more suited to the busy streets of a city, than the snorting, noisy, smoking, gritty abominations which monopolize the right of way in the busiest streets of the New South Wales capital. But enough of Auckland.

Taking advantage of the Easter holidays, we took out our excursion tickets for the hot lakes, and started on the Wednesday—a merry party of six.

The railway runs on the narrow gauge, but the carriages are comfortable and clean, and are of local manufacture. The *employés* were not remarkable for either smartness or civility—at least such was my experience. Doubtless travellers are often exacting and inconsiderate ; but tact, temper, and urbanity are as essential to a railway porter as to a policeman ; and it is after all just as easy to be courteous to a stranger, as rude. The appearance and behaviour of the railway officials here, struck me as being slovenly and boorish. They seemed to deem it incumbent on them, with luggage especially, to completely outvie the ordinary coasting steamboat sailor in the vigour of their haulage and the destructiveness of their handling. The guards I do not include in this adverse criticism, as we found them polite, active, and neat.

The railway stations do not strike one as being

elaborately ornate. In fact they err too much on the other side, and are painfully bare and devoid of comfort. The platforms, for instance, need not be all sand and dust and grit, however much from the draper's and cobbler's point of view these may be desirable concomitants. Surely, too, a few benches for tired intending passengers, and a decent awning or some shelter from the elements, might be provided. The line is not fenced, and so the engines are all provided with ponderous cow-catchers. Some attempts have been made, here and there, to plant shade-trees along the track; but no attempt at gardening has as yet seemingly been attempted by station-masters. Judging from the published time-tables I should think they had plenty of time on their hands to devote a little attention in this direction.

Around Auckland, the country seems pretty populous. Farm-houses are frequent, villas numerous, cultivation common, and every now and then a modest little spire marks the site of a snug little village. The strata we note in the cuttings is ridgy, wavy, and streaked like a ribbon, showing the volcanic influences that have been at work.

Nearing the Waikato Hills, whose broken outlines loom out dark on the horizon; we pass great rich flats, with a black, peaty soil; and here, draining and trenching is being extensively carried on. Where the land lies higher, nothing is to be seen but league upon league of bracken and manouka, or ti-tree scrub. This is as characteristic of

all northern New Zealand scenery as gum-trees are of Australia, or heather of the Scottish Highlands. The perpetual unbroken stretch of dun brown or green fern soon grows very monotonous. In all the swamps, flax and green sedge (the raupo of the natives) form an agreeable contrast to the eternal ferns.

In places, black tracts show where the fern has been burned down, and in many a distant valley and on the flanks of all the hills we see the smoke of fires, where the annual autumn burning is even now being proceeded with. The cattle are fat and sleek. The sheep, compared with the ordinary Australian "muttons," look gigantic. At one village we see a rustic mill, with its water-wheel busily revolving, and the water splashing from its glistening blades. It is the first water-mill we have seen for years. Clear water and foaming rivulets, plashing over black rocks; still brooks, gleaming from a sedgy margin; or small still lakes, glistening like jewels in some emerald setting, all testify to the fact that here Nature is kinder than with us in drought-haunted Australia.

At Mercer, which is a tidy compact village with wide streets, we stop for lunch, and see our first batch of Maoris, dressed in gaudy prints and blankets. Every woman has a child a-straddle on her back, and a short black pipe in her mouth. The men look awkward, shambling, and out of place in their ill-fitting European garments.

Here, the strong Waikato flows with a peaceful, sluggish-looking current. Deceptive enough this,

as it is in reality swift and full of eddies and undertows, which make it dangerous to bathers. This most beautiful river we keep with us now all the way up to Cambridge, getting an occasional glimpse of its pure free current as the banks here and there open, while we pursue our onward course.

At Huntley, there are two coal-mines, with great beds of burning refuse ; lines of rail and staiths on the river for the trucks. A small river steamer is here loading. The scene suggests what Newcastle must have been in its very early days.

An irate Irishwoman now affords amusement to the passengers by opening out on the colliery doctor, for some real or imaginary dereliction of duty. She stormed in orthodox virago fashion, and the poor disciple of Galen meekly had to bow before the storm of Celtic wrath. If I might interpret the glitter in his eye, and the flush on his wrinkled cheek, however, I would say that if ever that Irishwoman chances to be in need of his medical services, she may have to undergo about the very liveliest time that all the occult resources of the pharmacopœia are capable of producing.

Note this young, nice-looking Maori girl. What a "get up !" Man's hat, with feathers of sorts, Scotch shawl of the "dambrod" pattern, and the colours such as we see in early prints of Joseph when dressed in his historical coat. A vivid green scarf, pinchbeck brooch as big as a highland targe, flaming red petticoat, and high-heeled boots, complete the *bizarre* costume. And yet the colours, loud and *outré* as they are, seem to

suit the soft, warm complexion, the black hair, gleaming teeth, and lustrous eyes of the dusky maiden.

At a small village, with an unpronounceable native name, where the Waipa mingles its pellucid stream with the blue Waikato, we see the remains of an ancient Maori burying-place. It is market-day here. Crowds of stalwart lads career madly up and down on horseback, chasing unruly mobs of bellowing cattle to and fro. Substantial-looking farmers and dealers are congregated round the chief hotel. A busy hum and general bustle bespeak active business; and the neat cottages peeping from clumps of ash, elm, plane, and oak, surrounded with gardens; and the bright, clear river sparkling beside us, all carry our thoughts back to the mother country; and we could easily fancy we were again at a village fair in dear old England.

Now we are entering on the famous Waikato pastures. The cattle would delight the eye of a farmer. Cheese-making is here a flourishing industry. The people all seem healthy, happy, and well-to-do. The air is exhilarating; our spirits rise, our chests expand; and as the train rolls into Cambridge, our halting-place for the night, we feel hungry enough to eat a tailor stuffed with needles.

CHAPTER III.

Cambridge—Mixture of races—Our Jehu, Harry—The Waikato river—Novel sheep feed—The Waikato terraces—A town of one building—A dangerous pass—The lonely lovely bush—First glimpse of Rotorua—Ohinemutu—Steams and stench—The primitive cooking-pot—Striking contrasts—Wailing for the dead—An artless beggar “for the plate”—The baths—Whackarewarewa—A Maori larder—Volcanic marvels—Subterranean activity—Barter—The road maintenance man—Forest wealth—The track of the destroyer—The Blue Lake—Mussel-shell Lake—Wairoa village—Kate the guide—McRae’s comfortable home.

AT Cambridge there is a commodious hotel kept by Mr. Gillett. In the big garden behind the house I came upon many old friends—the dear wee modest daisy, sweetwilliam, violets, old-fashioned roses, stocks, primroses, and all the favourites of an English garden—gooseberry bushes of something like the home proportions, and cabbages of giant size, all spoke of a cooler climate than that we had just left. The early mornings, with the heavy dew begemming every leaf and blade, and the fresh breeze scattering the liquid pearls at every puff, are most bracing and refreshing after the hot, languid Sydney summer. Cambridge is a neat, though straggling town. It is fairly in the Maori country, and groups

of gaudily dressed Maoris and half-castes are everywhere met with. Evidences of the mixture of race are apparent in the sign-boards. Each English announcement of the trade or profession practised inside, is blazoned also with the Maori equivalent in Roman letters. Owing to the admirable Maori schools, most of the younger natives can now read and write very fairly. Lawyers and land-agents seem to thrive here, judging from the sign-boards. A flaring placard catches my eye, bearing witness to the fact that on Easter Monday, after the sports, there will be a Maori dance, proceedings to conclude with European dances. These mixed dances, from all accounts, are not such as St. Anthony would have patronized.

Under the care of Harry Kerr, one of the very nicest, most efficient, and most good-natured of Jehus it has ever been my good fortune to encounter, we take our departure from the hotel in the sweet, fresh morning, and behind a spanking team of fine, broad-chested, clean-limbed, well-matched horses, in a comfortable American coach hung on leather springs, we merrily rattle through the quiet little town ; and, turning the corner, we behold the noble Waikato, spanned by three bridges, surging and foaming between its high banks, which are clad with verdure to the water's edge. The river here is very swift, and really a regal stream. It boils and hisses and bubbles along, with a fierce, impatient swoop. Scooping out a cauldron-like hollow in the rocks here, dash-

ing in impetuous headlong rush upon a jagged point there, now rolling over on itself, and tumbling in unrestrained exuberance among the boulders; and then with a swift dash, spreading its bosom, calm and unruffled to the kiss of the sun, as it leaves the rocky defile, and careers along through the plain. At the mouth of the gorge a wide basin is formed by the junction of a mountain stream; and here a massive "boom" of great logs, chained together, is cast across the river. Within the barrier thus formed, immense quantities of sawn timber and logs are spinning and curling, chafing and fretting, as if anxious to escape from durance and resume their rapid flight down stream.

A strange fodder here takes the place of the lucerne, to which, as a New South Welshman, I am more accustomed. Let our coast farmers take a hint. Along with grasses, turnips are sown. Cattle, horses, and sheep are turned in to eat down the crop, bit by bit, when it has attained a good growth; and all animals alike seem to thrive and get fat on the succulent feed thus provided. When the crop is sufficiently grazed down, a disc harrow is next put through the field, which brings the turnip roots to the surface, and the cattle and sheep are again turned in to regale themselves afresh. A curious instance of adaptation to circumstances is given by the sheep here. They learn in time to paw the earth away from the turnip roots, and actually eat them out of the soil. In the black alluvial plains of New South Wales, too, where wild carrots are a common growth, the

sheep in times of drought will with infinite patience and care draw the roots from the soil, and so keep life in their miserable carcasses. And similarly with thistle roots.

Over the river on the right, rise a series of terraces, so symmetrically fashioned that it is hard to believe the river alone originated them. These are the far-famed Waikato terraces, formed, so geologists tell us, when all this region was a lake bed. Between are deep gulches, sunken canyons, and ravines, with curious cones thrown in here and there. And over all, at the back, the misty mountains rear their mysterious heads, while the river foams along at our feet. It is a lovely scene. What a river for trout. Harry, however, informs me that the water is so impregnated with minerals that fish will not thrive in these streams. The more's the pity.

Many of these steep conical hills we see, scattered at intervals over the vast champaign, have a gaping chasm on one side, where, during some former fierce cataclysm, the pent up molten lava must have burst the cindery barrier, and rushed, a living torrent of fire, into the deep ravines below. Others bear traces of Maori fortifications, and each has some story of blood and strife associated with it.

A long climb, with steep craggy heights to our left, and the river to the right brings us to the summit of a fern-covered saddle, and far as the eye can reach in front, we look across a great strath or broad valley, all barred and scarred,

disrupted, riven, and tumbled about, into ravines, terraces, ridges, and conical peaks, showing what terrific and eccentric forces must have been at work at some former epoch. We bowl rapidly along now, crossing numerous clear brooks, their sparkling current playing amid the vivid green of the watercress, and forming a grateful contrast to the dun bracken and manouka all around. In among the ridges, are tall groups of tree-ferns, with enormous fronds radiating gracefully from their mossy centres. But now, with a cheery halloa to the horses, who neigh and prick their ears responsively, with a crack of the whip and the rattle of hoofs, we pull up at Rose's Hotel, at Oxford; and, laden with dust, we descend, shake ourselves, and are shown into clean cool rooms, where we make plentiful ablutions, and soon enjoy a most appetizing and toothsome repast. We expect from the name to find a pretentious academic town. Not so, however. The traveller in the colonies, soon learns to attach mighty little significance to names. In N.S.W., for instance, Vegetable Creek is a mining centre with sometimes eight or nine thousand inhabitants, while the adjacent township of Dundee, consists of two public-houses, one store, and a few bark-covered sheds, pig-styes, and a post-office.

The town of Oxford, however, at present, merely consists of the hotel. It is a well-ordered, comfortable town. There is no squabbling, because there are no neighbours; and for the same reason, drainage and other municipal works are all as

perfect as they can make them now-a-days. For a quiet retreat for an invalid wanting rest and fresh air, commend me to Oxford. Mr. Rose is a frank, genial, hearty host. He looks as if his food agreed with him, and his beef is the best I have tasted for twenty years.

The next stage from Oxford is a short one, but a toilsome. The road winds upwards through deep cuttings, with great gorges on either side; and by-and-by we halt to change horses at a little collection of huts, on a lonely hillside, while far below, the concealed river splashes and gurgles amid a forest of tree-ferns and undergrowth. Water for the horses is here supplied by a ram-lift from the river below.

The road on ahead is very narrow, and winds along the side of a steep hill. There are two dangers—one, that of falling over the siding down the almost sheer face of the cliff; the other, that of landslips from above. After rain, the resident groom rides daily over the road to see that no earth-fall has taken place during the period between his visits.

What a magnificent view lies here spread out before us! To the left is an immense ravine, the bed of the Waiho river. The sides of the deep valley are clad in all the inexpressible loveliness of the New Zealand bush. What an air of mystery hangs around its deep, dark recesses! How vivid are the varied shades of glossy green, lit up by the passing sunbeam! What a rare radiance shines out, from what was but now a gloomy depth, as

the rapid clouds flit past, and let the sunshafts dart far into the nooks, where the most exquisite forms of fern life are "wasting their sweetness." The defile here is 830 feet deep from where the coach passes, and on the other side of the narrow neck of land over which we roll, another equally deep and equally lovely valley spreads its beauties before our admiring eyes.

Then we enter the hoary, silent bush, and for twelve miles we drive through a perfect avenue of delights. Here is the giant *pittosperum*: there the tall *totarah*. Multitudes of *ratas*, having coiled round some fated giant of the forest, with their Laocoon-like embrace, now rear aloft their bloated girth; and all around are ferns, creepers, *llianas*, orchids, trailing drapery, exquisite mosses, and all the bewildering beauty of the indescribable bush.

For nearly two hours, we wend our entranced way through this realm of enchantment. Every revolution of the silent wheels over the soft, yielding, but springy forest-road, reveals some fresh charm, some rarer vision of sylvan beauty. And yet it is very still. No sound of bird, no ring of axe here. All is still, as if under a spell—and insensibly we become hushed and almost awed, as we look up to the giant height of the mossy pines and *totaras*, or peer into the shadowy arcades where exquisite ferns and creepers trail their leafy luxuriance over the rotting tree-trunks, as if to hide the evidences of decay beneath their living mantle of velvety green.

Presently the track widens and the forest gets thinner. We round a rocky bluff, and there—before us, far below, in the distance—shimmering through the tree-boles as if the azure vault had fallen to earth, we get our first glimpse of Rotorua.

Mokoia Island in the centre, white cliffs on the further side, faint curling cloudlets of steam on the hither shore. There is a general long-drawn sigh, and then exclamations of pleasure, delight, and surprise burst from every lip.

We receive a hearty, noisy greeting from a cart-load of merry Maoris as they drive past, and very shortly we rattle across the bridge over the hot steaming creek, and find ourselves at friend Kelly's Palace Hotel, in far-famed Ohinemutu.

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Steam everywhere, and an all-pervading sulphurous stench, apprise us very forcibly that we are now in the hot lake country. After a luxurious half-hour spent in the warm natural bath attached to the hotel, we take a languid stroll down by the beach, and survey the native settlement. The evening meal—potatoes and whitebait—is being cooked. The sound of incessant ebullition is at first almost awe inspiring. One realizes what a thin crust alone intervenes between one's shoe soles and the diabolical seething cauldron beneath. Naked children are bathing in a deep pool by the lake. Culinary matrons, gaudily dressed of course, squat and gossip round the steaming, sputtering holes, in which their viands are being cooked, and

beguile the time by desperate pulls at black, evil-smelling cutty-pipes. To a tattooed group sitting round the great council-hall an English interpreter is retailing the items of interest from a recently-arrived newspaper. What a contrast is here? The great *whare* is carved with all sorts of hideous, grotesque images. Surely, even in the wildest delirium, or the most dire nightmare, we've never seen such outrageous effigies. Surmounting a post used as a flagstaff, is a goggle-eyed monstrosity, with gaping jaws and lolling blood-red tongue; while close by, out nearer the point which forms the burial-place of the tribe, and was formerly a fortified *pah*, stands a neat little English church, with a pathway of shining white shells; and one's thoughts cannot help reverting to the stories of strife and treachery, and cannibalism, and all the horrors of pagan cruelty, now happily banished for ever before the gentle, loving message of the Cross.

A long-drawn, wailing, dirge-like cry proceeds from one inclosure. Looking in we see a company of women, seated in rows beside a tent, crooning and keening with a strangely weird inflection; and peering further, we are soon able to discover the cause. Beneath the canvas lies a figure draped in white—so stiff, so rigid. No motion in those stiff, extended limbs. An old chief, weeping copious tears, sits beside his dead son, patting the poor unconscious corpse, with a curiously pathetic tenderness. The old woman who officiates as chief mourner, waves a fan back-

ward and forward over the poor dead face ; and as the "keen" rises and falls with its wailing cadences, we reverently uncover in the presence of the dead, and recognize the common tie of humanity, in the grief that comes to all alike.

Next morning (Good Friday) there was a native service in the little church. One buxom lass, in garments of rainbow hue, accosts us, wanting "change for a shilling."

"What for?" we asked.

"Put sikeepence in plate," she said ; "shillin' too much." Artless maid !

Another one, more mercenary still, unblushingly begged for the sixpence itself for the same sacred purpose. No doubt she had heard of "spoiling the Egyptians."

I am reminded by this, of a famous old Calcutta merchant who was no less noted for his great wealth, than for his niggardliness. Coming out of church one day, a merry wag, seeing the rupee for the plate, ostentatiously held between the finger and thumb of the merchant, and wishing to test him, tapped him on the shoulder and whispered,—

"I say, S—, can ye lend me a rupee for the plate?"

"Ou aye," readily responded S—.

Then second thoughts having seemingly intervened, he muttered,—

"It's a' richt, I'll pit it in for ye," which he did, but my friend narrowly watched him, and saw that he only put in one rupee for the two. Old S— doubtless thought the rupee would be credited in the celestial treasury as his own offering, yet

nevertheless he sent his Durwan, next morning, to demand repayment from my waggish friend. Old S— would have possibly found his match in our simple Maori maiden.

The “tangi,” as the funeral feast and ceremony is called, was now in full swing. The weeping and wailing were even more demonstrative than that of the day previous; but we were told that the evening would be wound up with a general gorge, and possibly a drunken spree.

In the church the men sat on one side and the women on the other. The singing was pleasing, but peculiar. The strains reminded me somewhat of India. We went all through the neglected graveyard. We peeped into many of the little pent-house receptacles for the dead, and saw coffins both big and small, and then after a glorious bath in the Madame Rachel Fountain down at Sulphur Point, we lunched, and started for Wairoa.

On this side, the lake is bordered by a great flat plain, and at Sulphur Point—as it is called—lies the Government township. The only buildings at present are—the Government baths, the post and telegraph office, a spacious empty hospital, and doctor’s and attendants’ quarters. The baths are well arranged, capitally managed, and every comfort is provided in the shape of towels, shower-bath, and all the usual accessories of a modern hydropathic establishment. During our stay we tried the temper of all the baths. We found the Priest’s bath the warmest and most relaxing, but for pure unalloyed Sybaritic deli-

ciousness the Madame Rachel takes the palm. The water is alkaline, and makes the skin feel velvety soft; and, in short, the sensations are simply perfectly pleasurable.

On the margin of the plain proceeding towards Wairoa, at the base of a burnt cindery-looking pile of scarped cliffs, we see great gouts and bursts of steam escaping from various centres of activity, and a white cloud rests over an open space, which, as the wind ever and anon lifts the vapoury veil, is found to contain a village, consisting of a few whares and huts, with groups of natives moving to and fro.

This is the Geyser village of Whackarewarewa—pronounced Whack-a-reewa-reewa. Crossing a high wooden bridge, which spans a rapid noisy stream, we enter the village. The first man we meet is a tall native attired in the garb of a priest, with rosary and crucifix round his neck, and he affably returns our salutation. In some gardens, bunches of home grown tobacco are hanging to dry under a thatch of raupo. Behind this hut a huge dead pig is strung up. It needs little hanging, as, judging from certain sensations, we can certify that it is high enough already. Peeping into this zinc-plate-covered larder, we find a collection of scraps that would make a beggar turn green; and a great gory boar's head, black and nasty-looking, stares at us with lack-lustre eyes from the top of a pile of potatoes. Verily the Maoris are not dainty feeders, but of this anon. We have to enter our names in a book, and submit

to a mild extortion of sundry small coins, and then a motley cavalcade of children, tattooed old men, women with infants astride their backs, laughing girls, and begging half-breeds, escort us to see the wonders of the place.

What a scene of desolate grandeur ! The background—of limestone cliffs, with great white seams and landslips, which look like the marks of old wounds. Beneath and around a perfect vortex of most malevolent activity and boiling confusion. Sputtering pot-holes here, spouting geysers there. Roaring steam escapes, shrill, whistling fissures. Hoarse, bellowing fog-horns everywhere. On this side, fierce ebullition ; on that, a gentle sputtering and simmering. Here a noiseless steaming, and there a blast as if Apollyon were bad with catarrh, and were blowing his nose in a rage ; and over all, the unmistakable odour which popular legend has ever attributed to the atmosphere of the infernal regions. The presence of sulphur is further fully betokened by the beautiful yellow efflorescence and little caverns of orange crystals round most of the holes.

Here is the great Geyser itself—one of the most active in this district of incessant volcanic action. Great swelling volumes of boiling water rush up fiercely in hissing hot columns. These plash and tumble madly back, and are again shot forth, and billow over a white encrusted face of fretted rock, into a hole of mysterious depth ; and as the steam is ever and anon wafted aside, the intense blue of the unfathomed depth is seen like a sapphire set in an encrustation of whitest marble.

Wonder upon wonder here. We stand on a thin echoing crust of pumice and silica, with a raging hell beneath our feet. Steam and boiling water issue from every chink and cranny, and yet at the foot of the crested reef—so close that we could dip our foot into it—flows the purling, plashing stream, so cool, so fresh-looking, with trailing masses of aquatic weeds, swaying to and fro in the swift current.

Over the river—what a contrast. If here be life, brightness, intense activity, what have we there? A black, oozy, slimy flat; sulphurous steam, too, hangs over the Stygian, quaking bog; but instead of azure water, only bubbling, lethargic mud comes, with a thick, slab mass; seething, in horrible suggestiveness of witches' broth and malignant wizard spells. One could fancy the flat a fit abode for ghouls, vampires, and evil spirits. While the living stream, the pure white and deep blue of the terraces, and lively pools, might be the chosen abode of spirits of healing and beneficence. The sound is indescribable. You hear the thump, thump, as of pent-up engines. The din confuses you; and as you hear it gradually softening in the distance, you begin to realize what an awful thing is nature, and what an atom is man.

Let us look for a brief instant at this deep pelucid pool. Clear as is the water, the eye cannot penetrate far into the unequalled blue of its mysterious depths. It is perfectly still. A quivering steam hovers on its surface. So innocent and in-

viting it looks. And yet it would boil the flesh from your bones did you but trust yourself to its siren seductiveness. At one pit mouth close by, the mephitic breath from below has bleached the overhanging scrub to a ghastly yellowish white. It is shudderingly suggestive of grave-clothes. The marvels are legion. The sensations they excite I shall not attempt to analyze. It is a memory to linger with one for a lifetime.

Commerce here has her votaries, however. One Maori offers us a carved stick for sale. Mistaking us for a Rothschild, he demands a pound for the product of his industry, but without a blush eventually transfers the stick at a reduction of only fifty per cent. ; and we are presently thrown into paroxysms of gratification by the information which is volunteered by an acid old cynic, that "if we had on'y bluffed the beggar, we mout a 'ad it for five bob."

Entering our vehicles again, we sweep once more through the plain in the direction of the lake, and crossing the river begin to climb the skirting hills, by a long, devious, dusty track. Presently we pass a lonely tombstone, sacred to the memory of a drunken Maori, who broke his neck by falling from his horse while returning from a festive party, about a year ago.

Gazing through a narrow gorge on the right, we see the long square table-top of steep Horo Horo ; the intervening champaign being a succession of those terraces and ravines and cones, so characteristic of "all the region round about."

This district has not yet "been through the land court," as is the phraseology of our informant. The precise ownership is not yet finally determined. And so, as there is no safe title procurable, there is no tenancy. This explains what I had been remarking, namely, the absence of flock or herd or house or tilled field. And yet, there is grand pasturage among these hollows. The briar is fast becoming a dangerous pest here, as in parts of Australia. The Maoris are too lazy to milk cows, so they do not keep them. The whole district, so far as being made productive goes, is a sad wilderness—a regrettable waste. It is Good Friday, and yet here is a road-maintenance man, hard at work, with his shovel and pick and barrow.

"What, Jim? workin' on Sunday?" says Joe, our driver.

"Oh, if I wasn't workin', some blasted cove, wot wants my billet, 'ud be makin' remarks. They can't say much if I keeps at it. 'Sides there ain't much to do here if I was idle, 'cept it might be to get drunk."

With which philosophical summing-up the old fellow shovelled away again. What a grim satire on the resources of modern civilization, and the brotherly love of the 'orny 'anded to each other!

Now we enter the cool green bush, with its pleasant shade, its humid smell, and all the lovely profusion of its ever-changing forms of vegetable beauty. Who could ever tire of the glorious bush

of this magnificent country? What a contrast to the sombre monotony of the Australian forest.

Ferns!!! "*Ram! Ram! Sita Ram!!!* Could anything be more exquisite?

Tree fuchsias!! As big as gum-trees.

Pittosperum!!! Giants of convoluted shrubbery.

Lianas, and supple-jacks, and creepers!! festooning the forest, like boas and pythons of a new order of creation.

Mosses!! Never was carpet woven in loom half so exquisite.

And here, too, the "trail of the serpent is over all." The woodcutter is making sad havoc with this peerless bush. Deep ruts, with ruthlessly felled shrubbery, and withering branches on either side, lead away into the bosky dells, where the mossy giants, with all their adornment of orchid, and trailing fern, and hoary lichen, shiver under the fell strokes of the lumber-man, and bow their stately heads and fall to rise no more. Henceforth, for the clean, sappy wood, the odour of red herring and the smell of sperm candles take the place of the faint fresh scent of morning in the dewy glade, where the moss and wild flowers send up their sweet kisses; and we can almost fancy the giant shuddering as the ripping-saw tears at his vitals, or weeping, as the nails are driven, that forces him to embrace the oilman's or the chandler's distasteful wares.

What ho! What fresh beauty is this awaiting us? Here is surely the sweetest, prettiest, little lake ever sun shone on or wind caressed. It is

the Blue Lake—Tikitapu—home of the dreaded Taniwha (the Taniwha is the water-kelpie of the Maoris). How perfectly beautiful looks the lake, embosomed amid her surrounding craggy hills! The white gleam of this landslip from the pumice cliff, contrasts so sharply with the deep sombre shadow of the wooded dell beside. Here at our feet is a semi-circular beach of white ashes, with a lapping fringe of olive-green ripples; and on the lake's clear bosom the breeze raises thousands of tiny wavelets, that sparkle and flash as if silver trout were chasing each other in myriads; while, at times, a gust comes sweeping through the ravines, and raises great black bars of shadow on the face of the waters.

We cross a narrow neck, and there down, down, eighty feet below, lies another larger and not less lovely sheet of water, Lake Rotokakahi, or Mussel-shell Lake. It stretches away before us, a plain of burnished silver for about four miles. It is bounded opposite to us by a buttressed, flat-topped range of steep mountains, along whose base, and skirting the lake for its entire distance, winds the road to Taupo and Napier. Away at the far end lies a small islet, like a waterfowl at rest, and yet farther away, looking soft in the blue haze of distance, beyond the low green hills that bound the farther extreme of Rotokakahi, rises a mighty crest, beneath whose ample shadow reposes another, and yet another lake. Words utterly fail to depict the magic beauty of this wondrous region.

At our feet, nestling amid willows and fruit trees, and cheered by the babble of the noisy brook, lies Wairoa.

What noisy, jabbering crew have we here? They are dirty, ragged, boisterous, uncivil, rude. These are the poorest specimens of natives we have yet seen. Dogs, pigs, children, lads and lasses, all unite in emulating Babel. They are all aggressive. They have been spoiled completely by the tourists taking too much notice of them and treating them too liberally, and now they are an unmitigated nuisance.

We were introduced to Kate the famous guide, recipient of the Humane Society's medal, and quite a well-known character in the lake country. We found Kate to be, judging by first impressions, a gentle, soft-voiced woman, rather deaf, and, if anything, somewhat stupid. One should be cautious of first impressions.

We are glad at last to escape from the noise into one of Mrs. McRae's natty, quiet bedrooms, and under McRae's hospitable roof we gladly rest for the night.

Comfort is not the word. McRae's is not an hotel—it is a home. Could any word convey a higher appreciation of his princely fare and his ever wakeful consideration for the comfort of his guests?

Hurrah! the Terraces to-morrow!! And now to sleep.

“To sleep, but not to rest.”

CHAPTER IV.

A rude awaking—An enraged Amazon—"Too hot" for the thief—We start for the Terraces—Lake Tarawera—A merry boat's-crew—The Devil's Rock—Native delicacies—The landing-place—First view of the Terraces—Beauty indescribable—The great basin empty—Pluto's foghorn—The majesty of nature—Wonder upon wonder—The mud cones—Devil's Hole—The Porridge-Pot—Devil's Wife—Poor Ruakini.

HILLO! What's the matter? we hurriedly exclaim. It is a little past midnight. The room is dark, as the moon is just now obscured by a passing cloud.

Did anybody wake me? I vow I felt some one pulling at the bed? And yet there is apparently nothing stirring in the room.

Bang! rattle! What now? The bed is violently tossed to and fro. The walls seem dancing on all sides. The floor sways and creaks, and we hear the crash of falling crockery below. Cocks are crowing. Dogs are barking and howling. And then all again is still. It is very mysterious.

A sickly sensation creeps over us. And then it begins to dawn upon our dumbfounded senses that we have just experienced an earthquake. It was a very sharp one, too, while it lasted. We

felt, in addition to the big shock, no less than seven other tremors, or distinct quakes, during the night. Nothing more forcibly or vividly brought home to us the nature of the country we were now in. The eerie feeling produced by the shock does not readily pass away. One lies in a state of intense expectancy, waiting for the next development. I was not frightened; but I, as well as others, got a severe headache. This must have come, I think, from nervous tension. We were glad when sunrise awoke us from a troubled sleep; and you may be sure there was an animated interchange of what we thought and how we felt, while we discussed our morning meal.

A terrific row now, outside! Is it another earthquake?—a murder?—a rising of the natives? What can it be? We rush to the verandah, and there, in front of the assembled clan, a stalwart female paces to and fro, literally foaming with rage and bristling with electric energy, as she denounces some one in voluble Maori commination. What an Amazon! How she gesticulates! She clenches her fist, and strikes it with a whack into the palm of her other hand. She walks to and fro with short angry steps, like a savage, treading a war measure;—she stamps her foot like an angry charger chafing at restraint. What a torrent of words!—what a shrill clamour! Can this be the gentle Kate, our *débonnaire* and soft-voiced guide, with whom we were so favourably impressed yesternight?

It was indeed Kate; and when we learned the

cause of her fierce indignation we excused her in our hearts at once. The fact was, Kate had just discovered that one of the interesting youths of the hamlet had stolen her watch from her tent, and, having a shrewd suspicion as to the identity of the culprit, she was piling the agony on his head and surely never was there such an oration as that just so vehemently declaimed by this roused Pythoness.

Amid interjections, exclamations, soothing entreaties, and wild outcries, the torrent of her invective went on, until in sheer physical exhaustion she was compelled to pause; and then, turning to our party, she explained her loss to us in English, and ever and anon turned round to still further lash with her scorpion tongue the supposed thief, who cowered before her like a guilty thing.

"My word!" says McRae. "If Kate does not get her watch back, I pity the whole tribe of them. She rules the roost here when she likes."

The thief seemed to think he had made a bad job of it too; for by-and-by Kate found the watch restored to its wonted position at the head of her bed, and she soon regained her accustomed composure.

In the meantime, however, she had certainly altered our first impressions, and revealed to us an unsuspected phase in her curiously complex character.

Kate is really a curiosity. She is a half-blood—her father having been a Scotchman. She was, I believe, educated for several years at a school in

Auckland, but preferred the free unconventional life of the whare and the bush. At times she could be conveniently deaf. She professes a very outspoken contempt for blue ribbonism, and can put herself outside a sample of whisky with as much nonchalance as apparent gusto. Not that she is intemperate; far from it. We found her exceedingly attentive and obliging, and she was particularly nice in her behaviour to one old lady of the party, who but for Kate's strong guiding arm would have fared badly during the long day's sight-seeing. Kate is proud of her Scotch descent, and never fails to put in her claim to Caledonian nationality. Altogether, we found her an amusing study. Sophia, the other accredited guide, we did not see at all. She had gone away on a visit to some other settlement.

I would fain record my impressions of the Terraces. I know they have been done to death. I am aware that words are all too feeble to give a just estimate of their many-sided wondrous beauty. And yet they so haunt my imagination! They so appeal to my inner consciousness that I must commit my thoughts about them to paper, and perchance let my friends share with me, in some measure, the keen pleasure of the retrospection.

We were fortunate in the weather. It was a glorious morning when we started. The sun lit up the long blue arm of Lake Tarawera, on which we gazed from the top of the steep descent, down which we scrambled and jumped all full of robust gaiety and pleasurable expectancy. Marshalled

by Kate, we crowd into the large whaleboat. There are eleven of us tourists, six brawny rowers, one crouching native woman and Kate. Altogether nineteen of a party. With a cheery cry, the Maoris dip their oars into the blue lake; and to the accompaniment of song and chorus and jest, they pull strongly and steadily for the open lake, and soon before a spanking breeze we are scudding merrily along.

"What a day we're having!" One excitable punster of our party, in the exuberance of his delight, and anxious to show his appreciation of a good chorus that has just been sung, tosses his hat high in air; and, of course, it at once becomes a sport for the breezes, sails away to leeward, and soon floats upon the tiny billows.

"Man overboard!" we yell. "'Bout ship! Man the lifeboat!" The Maoris grin, the ladies squeal, the gentlemen roar, and Kate claps her hands and yells out, "A fine! a fine! A bottle of whisky for the men!" For the moment we might have pardonably been mistaken for a small private lunatic asylum out for a picnic.

Away we go in pursuit of the hat. We have to haul down the sail, and we lose ten minutes; but under the promise of the "Barley Bree," the rowers strain at the oars, and soon the hat is restored to the bereaved owner.

On again we go. What a beautiful expanse! What a vivid green on the steep precipitous banks! Beautiful coves indent the coast, with here and there a fringe of sandy beach. Some giant sen-

tinels of gray pumice stand out in lonely isolation from the steep point of yonder rounded hill. The truncated cone of Mount Tarawera stands up black against us yonder ; while Mount Edgecombe, a very Saul amongst the others, rears his towering crest far, far away, his base being lost in the curve of distance.

We pass the Devil's Rock, on which it was customary formerly to deposit some offering to propitiate "Taipo" (the Maori equivalent for Satan) into giving the votary a fair wind ; the offering being flowers, twigs of trees, fruit, fish, &c. Kate suggests that the white folks generally put pennies on the rock now instead of twigs ; but the surroundings, not being favourable to the growth of a superstitious credulity, we ignore the possibility of satanic interference in our affairs, and defy "the devil and all his works."

We pull in now to a native settlement, where for sundry white coin we procure two kits of black grewsome-looking fresh-water prawns and a kit of very inferior apples.

Turning a point, with a solitary shag sitting reflectively on a partly-submerged tree-trunk, we enter another long arm or gulf, and find it terminates in a marshy flat, with a few huts dumped down promiscuously on the rising ground at the back, and a strong running creek bisecting the level delta ; and on either side white cliffs, draped in part with ferns, and with steam rising up from hot springs at their base. On ahead, amid burnt-looking bleak hummocks, we see more steam

clouds, and we are informed, "There lie the Terraces!"

The dream of years is about to be realized. Hastily disembarking, leaving the weaker and aged members of the party to be poled up the swift creek in canoes, we put on our sand-shoes, tramp along in Indian file through the tall manukau scrub. Kate's stalwart figure leads the way, with free swinging gait and elastic tread.

After a walk through the bracken of about a mile, we top a ridge, and at our feet lies the wonder of the world that has brought us so far. In the hollow flows the swift clear stream, up which we see the Maoris poling the canoes, with our friends seated very comfortably therein. On the left glistens the cold lake, steely and still. On the right gleams Rotomahana, the hot lake, with its sedgy shallows, its reeking, steaming margin, its two floating islands, and its winged hosts of waterfowl.

Right in front, spread out like a snowy cloud dropped from the heavens—rising to its fleecy frosted source, in the black, burnt bosom of the hill—billowing over in countless crested cascades of alabaster-like purity and marble whiteness; by terraced gradations, each one a gemmed chalice or fretted basin of purest white, the famous terraces of Rotomahana confront us!

We plod over a slushy courtyard as it were, and then reverently and softly, as if in the precincts of a sacred shrine, a silence having settled on our whole party, we mount those pearly stairs of exceeding loveliness.

Each fresh step is a new revelation. We look above ; all is a glistening, glowing mass of unearthly brilliancy. We look down—and who may describe the ineffable beauty of those translucent basins of opaline-tinted water? The blue is like nothing else “in the heavens above, or the earth beneath.” To what, then, can it be likened? It is a colour unique—*sui generis*—never again to be forgotten. Lapis lazuli is muddy before it. Opal, with its iridescence, gleams not so perfectly soft and lovely. The azure vault of heaven itself has not the dainty delicacy of that pearly tint. It is, in a word, exceeding beautiful ; and it must be seen to be understood. No man can describe it adequately. Nay, not even Ruskin, master though he be, could fitly picture it. And there is not one or two, but tens and twenties of these chaliced cups. The saucers of the gods, surely, these? The tea service of the Grecian goddesses? Can you not fancy Venus reposing on yonder crystalline couch, with its tracery of marble fretwork, its pearly lace woven by fairy fingers, dipping her dainty lips to sip the liquid gems that gleam so soft under the sunbeams? Bah! what need for metaphor? As I recall the scene I feel inclined to throw down the pen, and feel how utterly all endeavour must fail to reproduce the picture in words.

With a north-east wind blowing, we were fortunate enough to behold the White Terrace in one of the rare intervals, when the boiling fount (the origin of all this pearly overflow) was empty and dry.

This peculiarity is another of the mysteries of the place. Why the subterranean springs should have electric affinities for particular winds, may be known to Pan ; the fauns and elves and naiads and fairies, may know all about it, but mortals cannot explain it. The fact remains—the vast cavity at the top was empty. We could walk down its frosted steeps, and gaze into the very throat of the great geyser itself. The sun had licked dry the steps of the terraces, and the whiteness was almost too intense for the human eye. To peer underneath the curling lip of some of the frosted billows of stone was a relief, and in the semi-shade—what fresh revelations of beauty? Pearly globules, clusters of gems, delicate lacework, fretted coral, fluted tracery, crystallized dew, drifted flakes, curves, webs, cones, prisms, volutes, of immaculate glory—of whiteness such as no snow could equal—a creation of unutterable loveliness. An efflorescence of wondrous purity and beauty. It seems a shame—a sacrilege—to defile such a floor with common tread. I felt as Moses may have felt in the Presence itself, when he heard the voice : “Take thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground.”

And then the contrasts! Look at this mass of black rock, uprearing its bulk right from the lip of the great gleaming crater. The presiding genius has tried to relieve its uncompromising blackness by a thick drapery of soft moss and vernal ferns. The same green adornment brightens up the burnt scorched background of the cliff beyond. How

one wonders to see such delicate fronds growing with vivid greenness on the very edge of smouldering clay ; and, to all seeming, thriving beside living steam from pent-up fires below. And yet we shortly cease to wonder at anything. Everything is wonderful ; to such an extent, that the very capacity for wonder seems to become blunted and sated with repletion of wonders.

Right at the back of the geyser, having walked half round the circumference of the great open basin, we come up to a roaring blow-hole. There is a noise as if all the din of Pluto's multitudinous workshops were focussed into this outlet. A swift current of hot air and attenuated steam comes screeching forth ; and so strong is the blast that handfuls of large pebbles, thrown in by Kate, are sent spinning back, aloft into the air. Spouts of steam and jets of boiling water flash and flicker, and spirt and sputter among the white rocks below. They trickle and trail in glistening splendor over the incrustated bosses, the tattooed fringes, and the marble lips of the steep crater, at the back of which, right under the burning rocks, we are now standing. We are enveloped in steam. "The fountains of the deep" are breaking up all around us. It looks like a grand cloud of perpetual incense rising up to the great source of all life and activity, and we feel as the Psalmist may have felt, and our heart whispers to us, "Shall not Thy works praise thee, O God?"

As the perpetual, ceaseless beat of the throbbing engines below shakes the earth, we think again of

that apocalyptic vision, and can now realize how even earthly forces may be joining with spiritual intelligences, in the never-ending adoration and ascription ; and with a new significance we think of the phrase, "They rest not day and night."

Leaving the empty circumference, with its background of steam and ferns, and spouting gouts of boiling water, we descend the terraces, seeing the heavens in every pool ; and in a retired nook to the left, under an overhanging canopy of scrub, we come upon three silently overflowing hot wells, pouring their scalding libations over three crested structures of great beauty, to which fancy has given the names of Queen Victoria's Crown and the Prince of Wales's Crown. The third Kate appropriates, and calls it Kate's Crown.

Through a leafy arcade we now thread our way. The ground sounds hollow, and echoes to our tread. There is a scent of hothouse air, and pulling up the long velvety moss, a tiny steam-escape follows the roots, which are hot enough to be almost unpleasant to the touch. Nothing can more vividly suggest the thinness of the crust on which we gingerly tread. What a forcing-house !

Emerging into the open, we now stand on a narrow neck of land, with crumbling, burning rocks all around, on which it would be unsafe to venture. A deep, black valley, called the Valley of Death (most appropriate name), lies on the one hand, and on the other is an agitated pool, in which, some time ago, a poor woman was scalded to death.

A little further, and we come to a geyser called the Steam Engine, with a great spray leaping over ochreous-looking rocks.

Below is a boiling, hissing Phlegethon. It rejoices in the appellation of Ngahapu, meaning, "All the tribes rolled into one." Its hellish activity justifies its title. It is one of the most vigorous geysers of all the district. It has intermittent spasms of activity, during which the huge column of water spouts up with amazing force, and the din and commotion are truly infernal. A great column of steam towers aloft, in ever changing volumes like the "Pillar of cloud by day." The incessant vibration, and clang, and pulsing din, go unintermittingly on, and almost deafen us, as we shudderingly hurry past.

A few more yards bring us to the shore of the lake—blast-holes here too, on all hands—Takapau, a boiling cauldron, with countless lesser comrades, seething and bubbling all around, make us think that surely here all the witches of the earth are boiling their deadly porridge "thick and slab."

Through the scrub again. Now we come on a perfect hecatomb of broken bottles, empty cans, straw, envelopes, and waste paper. This is humorously named by Kate the Rotomahana Hotel, and is the place where lunch is usually devoured.

Up a steep, muddy hill now, and at the top we emerge on the mud flat, where many boiling mud-holes repeat the phenomena we have already seen, only substituting liquid boiling mud instead of water. We look down, and see a seething mass of molten

mud in incessant motion. It rises up in great circling domes and plastic cupolas, which seethe, and expand, and swell, and then break with a lazy, hissing, escape of steam; and the mass falls back and collapses, and heaves up and down with an unctuous horribleness. Sometimes a big spout rises up nearly to the outside rim of the deep hole, and then falls back with a sullen, vicious flop, as if some slimy spirit, there imprisoned, were angry and baffled at not being able to reach us, and smirch and scald us.

Here is the Coffee Pot, not inaptly named, if one looks at the brown liquid, swirling around, with an oily, dirty scum circling in endless eddies on the surface.

Behind us, as we glance around, the whole hillside, for many acres, smokes and steams, and as the sun is glinting on it, the effect is indescribably lovely, as contrasted with the sullen mud-holes into which we have been peering. The light fleecy wreaths of steam take on all sorts of rainbow tints from the sun, and curl gracefully aloft, like an army of cobwebs floating across a lawn on some sunny morning in spring.

There are now many extinct cones in this valley, and yet all the sights and sounds have a weird, uncanny suggestiveness. Poke your stick through the thin crust, and steam issues forth. Every cranny and fissure is steaming and hot, and the whole mountain is undoubtedly a hotbed of combustion.

The Devil's Hole, we hear roaring behind these

tumbled crags and smouldering cliffs. What a hoarse gasping! It sounds indeed as if Apollyon chained down below was being choked by the dogs of Cerberus, and that their snarling and his wrathful choking roar were being listened to by awe-stricken mortals. The wonders here again are "legion"—the Green Lake, the gypsum slabs; the Porridge-Pot, of which we taste, and exchange experiences.

One says, "it is acid."

Another says, "it is tasteless."

Yet another, "it is sweet."

Yet one more, "it tastes like ink."

I vow it "tastes like melted slate pencil," and we all agree that that is about as correct a definition as we can arrive at. The Maoris, we are told, frequently eat it in large quantities.

We climb next a white rocky eminence, and get a peep over the lake at the Pink Terraces on the far side with their circling canopy of steam.

We pass more scaly white efflorescences amid the scrub, gaze upon another active geyser with an unspellable name, wonder at the gurly blackness of "The Ink-Pot" in a state of frantic ebullition, and again dive into the thick scrub.

Here all is solemnly still. The earth shakes beneath us. We are walking over vast caverns of boiling mud and pent-up steam, and sometimes as we pass a crevice we can hear the boiling waters swishing and sighing restlessly far, far below.

The Devil's Wife was the next sensation, "and an angry wife was she," as the old song says.

What a grumbling, spitting, fiendish vixen she must be, if she is at all like this spuming, growling hole. Close by is a vast dried-up gulf of slaty mud,—at least, it was so when we saw it. It is uneuphemistically named The Bellyache, and at times we are told the moans and outcries are supernaturally terrible. It only indulged in one unearthly groan while we were there; but that was enough to startle us all, and make us hurry from the spot.

There are vast deposits of gypsum and sulphur here, and possibly as the central fires “slow down” and cool off, and when the railway comes with its utilitarian matter-of-fact presence, some speculators unless restrained will mar the poetry of this spot of marvels, and turn the glories of the place into pounds, shillings, and pence.

Here we come to warm caves and terraces of broad flagstones, where Maoris once lived. Moko’s Cave is a natural Turkish bath, where I forget how many generations Kate said were born and reared. They must have had a hot time of it. The fires are burning out this side the hill, surely. Here is a deserted terrace, now getting cold and moss-grown. Below it, and near the lake, is a boiling pool of some extent, and of an exquisite deep blue, in which a poor Maori-nurse-girl and her charge—a helpless infant—were boiled. The bodies were never recovered. Did the gnomes of the hill have a cannibal broth, we wonder? The cauldron is named after the poor girl, Ruakini, and it is forming a white terrace here on a small

scale, as if weaving a shroud for the poor victim.

It is now, however, getting near lunch-time. The sun is high in the heavens ; and, turning a corner, we emerge from the bush on to the terraced shore of the lake, where already in the hot springs, the prawns and potatoes are being cooked, and where our attendant Maoris are waiting, gastronomically expectant for their share of the good things in the provender baskets. "To what base uses may we not descend."

The foregoing descriptions of the hot lakes region, have been invested with a mournful interest since they were written, by reason of the awful and sudden eruption at Wairoa and Rotomahana, on the night of Wednesday, the 9th, and the morning of Thursday the 10th June, 1886. In the Appendix No. II. full extracts are given from the Australian papers, and it will be seen what an awful calamity has taken place.

The loss of life must have been appalling, and scores of the light-hearted merry Maoris, with whom we came in contact, were swallowed up in the black, blinding, stifling shower of ashes and volcanic mud. It is said the beautiful Terraces are gone, and Lake Rotomahana itself, is now a seething, hissing, quaking morass. The exquisite forest of Tikitapu lies buried ten feet deep under the deadly hail of fire. The whole face of the country for leagues around has been completely changed, so that the record of our summer holiday will form perhaps a valuable reference to many who wish to have an accurate description of what were certainly some of the most marvellous and beautiful natural phenomena on the face of our globe.

For fuller details I must refer the reader to Appendix II.

CHAPTER V.

Lunch—An ogre—Bush rats—Kate's "familiar"—The Pink Terraces—Sacilegious scribblers—Nature's masterpiece—Words too tame for such a sight—A Sybarite's bath—Back to Wairoa—The waterfall—Fern hunting—Adieu to Wairoa.

OUR appetites whetted by the long walk, excited into abnormal gastronomic activity by the fragrant smell of the boiled prawns and smoking potatoes, just withdrawn from the hot spring by the Maori cook, and by the sight of the cool long-necked bottles and tempting viands, which McRae's kind forethought had provided for our delectation, we were soon very busily engaged indeed. The clink of glass, the clatter of knives and forks, and the gentle gurgling of wine, all formed a melodious accompaniment to the soft lapping of the lake against the hollow canoes, and the dreamy gurgitation of the bubbling hot springs, beside which we ate in supreme enjoyment, and for a while in almost unbroken silence. Our appetites were whetted, I have said, and yet before the efforts of that old Maori chief and his henchmen the most valiant attempts of the best trencherman amongst us were as nothing. The chief himself, tattooed *de rigueur*, and with ugly black and yellow fangs like a wolf's,

was not above the seduction of a glass of foaming stout ; but to see the way he demolished prawns was "a caution to snakes." He kept one boy doing nothing else, but stripping these crustacea of their outer integument for him ; and, without salt, he swallowed dozen after dozen with a calm placidity which could only have been begotten of constant practice. Our punning hero of the hat episode vainly tried to emulate him, though his efforts were, from a European point of view, by no means despicable. Still he wasn't "a circumstance" to the ogre, as we had christened the absorbing warrior. After we had finished our repast, the *dissecta membra* of the feast were next collected, and the chief allowed first to select whatever took his fancy. He manifested a truly noble impartiality in his choice. Beef, ham, butter, bread, sheeps' tongues, potatoes, and marmalade, he mixed up in one vast incongruous, but evidently to him, delicious medley ; and then he proceeded to treat us to an exhibition, beside which the fire-eating and sword-swallowing tricks of the Arabs were tame by comparison. After he had gorged himself till we momentarily expected to see an apoplectic fit, his roving fancy betrayed a *penchant* for rats ! There were dozens of these rodents running about. The bush swarmed with them. Great, fat, sleek, cunning, impudent rogues, attracted by the refuse from the shellfish, the crumbs, and other "unconsidered trifles," and emboldened by long impunity, they scampered about quite close to us ; and the chief, bethinking him that he would not be so near

to our supplies at supper-time, resolved to "make rats" if he could "while the sun of present opportunity shone." Seizing an enormous "rung," therefore, more like a flagstaff than anything else, he squatted down behind a clump of bushes, and, with uplifted weapon, waited for the rats. The rats, however, were not such fools as to come within his reach. They skirmished warily round about and behind him, but never gave him a chance to show his accuracy of aim, until getting tired of his position, he threw his weapon at them with a grunt of disgust, and betook him to the consolations of his pipe.

Kate has a familiar spirit in the shape of a little French poodle named Tiny, and her solicitude for Tiny was touching. The poor, wee animal is really itself a first-rate guide, and from frequently having been over the ground, it was quite safe to follow Tiny's lead anywhere. Tiny's devotion to her mistress must be sometimes embarrassing, however; as for example, when at Wairoa, Kate's whereabouts, which she was not anxious should be known, was discovered by the little animal scratching at the door of a whare; and it became demonstrated thereby, that Kate, having become the proud possessor of a bottle of whisky, was discussing it with some of "the fathers of the hamlet" inside.

Great councils and important conventions used formerly to be held at this luncheon spot. The shore of the lake for some distance is paved in rows with broad gypsum flags. On these the chiefs and clansmen used to squat, enjoying the

grateful warmth from the steamy ground below, and discussing in open council grave affairs of state. Here were decided the questions of domestic reform and foreign policy. Here was arranged the plan of campaign for a coming war, or the provisions of some treaty of alliance. Meantime, gently simmering in the cooking-holes, under the eyes of the hungry and expectant senators, would be great kits of crayfish, potatoes, eels, ducks, or pig, with the women squatted around in picturesque groupings. And then the council being over, the feast would follow in true orthodox, diplomatic style. Thus ever does gastronomy play an important part in politics. And many a treaty has been materially modified by a good dinner.

Now, with much misgiving, the ladies seat themselves in the unsteady canoes, and soon we are being propelled by the well-fed paddlers over the calm bosom of Rotomahana. Wild fowl of all sorts are disporting themselves among the reeds and raupo. The water is quite tepid to the touch. And here another regal feast of adorable loveliness awaits us.

The Pink Terraces are, I think, even more lovely in some respects than the White. The tints have been sadly marred by the apish propensities of multitudes of cads and snobs, who have scrawled and scribbled their ignoble names on every available inch of space. It is truly lamentable to see such a painful exhibition of the awful absence of reverent feeling on the part of so

many. To myself personally, and, I think, to every member of our party, perhaps bar one—and his youth might have excused him—the terraces seemed like some hallowed place, some sacred spot, in which it was almost profane to speak aloud. Yet here on the exquisite enamel of these marvellously beautiful chalices, were vulgar scrawlings, as if all the devil-posessed swine of Gadara had suddenly been transported bodily here; and, afflicted with the “*cacoethes scribendi*,” had been impelled by the archfiend himself, to deface with their hoggish hieroglyphics this masterpiece of God’s handiwork in the great art gallery of nature.

You have seen those saucer-like fungi growing from the under surface of some old log in the forest?

Such, magnified many thousandfold, is the shape of the saucer-like formations of the Pink Terraces. But for the difference in tint, they are, of course, akin in shape and beauty to the White Terraces which I have already faintly endeavoured to describe.

One charm was added here, however, which was absent from the white vision over the lake. A perpetual pattering of tiny cascades, ringing like silver bells, here made melody over all the steaming pink expanse. The sun glinted on the moving mass of flowing waters, and the hillside seemed alive with rush of pearls, diamonds, and gems of refulgent lustre. A cloud steals swiftly over the face of the sky, and the effect is like a

transformation scene in some grand pantomimic display. Again the sun flashes forth, and the wind sweeps down on the moving face of the tinkling rills, and the effects are such as poet, in his most exalted flights of fancy, never even pictured. One might as well try to paint the phosphorescent rush of blazing foam from the prow of some proud vessel in tropic seas, as to describe the exquisite effects of colour, motion, light, shade, and enchanting sound from the Pink Terraces on such a day as this.

The great circular basin at the top is full to the brim with water, at boiling-point, of the most exquisite blue. The edges of the iridescent pool, over which dreamily hangs an ever-shifting cloud of swaying steam, are of a dainty, delicate pink. This shades off to a light saffron, or pale straw colour. Next a yellowish white is reflected from the snowy reefs which overhang the gulf, and then the great unfathomed chasm itself, with its deep azure blue. These jutting reefs of white incrustations overarch the abyss like icebergs, and project here and there like masses of honeycomb carved in purest marble by the skilled artificers of heaven. At times the soft cloud of swirling steam enwraps all this from your gaze ; and then coyly, as it were, the Angel of the Pool draws aside the veil, and affords a still more ravishing glimpse of the bewitching beauty that haunts you, takes possession of your entire being, and almost tempts you to sink into the embrace of the seductive lava. This is really no over description. I had that feeling

strongly myself, and it was shared by other members of the party. The witchery of this exquisite bath, albeit it would boil one to rags in an instant, is such that one feels a strange semi-hysterical impulse to sink softly in and be at rest.

N.B.—The feeling can be at once dispelled by dipping one's fingers into the scalding waters. The cure is instant and effectual.

The floor seems made of pearly sago, and a soft deposit covers the sides and bottom of the bathing pools, which feels grateful to the naked touch of our pliant limbs, as we roll lazily about in Sybaritic enjoyment. The baths are, of course, a little lower down the terrace, and you can have every degree of warmth, as you shift your position higher up or lower down. They are quite hidden from the view of any one at the edge of the lake, and thus we waited till the ladies had had their bath, and then we fairly revelled in the delicious sensations, and would have possibly remained there for hours, had not Kate, with stentorian voice, summoned us to hasten, as the day was drawing in to its close.

A day surely to be marked with a white stone in the calendar of one's life. The remembrance of these marvels will haunt me to my dying hour.

The swift return down the impulsive creek, with its fern-clad banks, thermal springs, scuttling wild ducks, and the skilled steering of our bronzed and tattooed Maoris were all very enjoyable; but during all the long row home, the disembarkation

in the dark, and toilsome climb up the steep hill, we were silent and reflective—for the spell of the wonders we had been privileged to behold was still deep upon us—and even the most unthinking of our party were calmed into quietude by the near remembrance of the visions of this ever-memorable day.

As if Nature were determined to leave out no element of the weird wonders of her working in this region of mystery and marvel, we were visited again, after we had retired for the night, with a succession of earthquakes. There was a mighty tremor and shaking, as if of some chained giant beneath, turning uneasily in his sleep.

The pale, cold moon had climbed the vault of night, and looked down serenely upon the turbulent desolation of this region of fire and vaporous turmoil; and as I resought my pillow my feelings were again those of the Psalmist:—"What is man, that Thou art mindful of him?" "Wonderful are Thy works, Almighty God. The whole earth is full of Thy wonders."

Next day, being Sunday, was devoted to quiet rest and curious observation of the many quaint phases of native life in the village. Wairoa is the site of an old mission, and there is a picturesque little church and a parsonage close by. Morning service was held in the church, and we noted the English hedges and trees, the mischievous briars, and myriads of tiny wild strawberry plants growing all around in rich luxuriance, evidence of the efforts of the early missionaries to bestow not only

spiritual but temporal benefits on the savage populations amongst whom their lot had been cast.

After a sumptuous repast at Mr. McRae's hospitable board, we proceeded under his guidance to view the waterfall at the head of the declivity which leads to Lake Tarawera. The surplus waters from Lake Rotokakahi here form a considerable stream, and now commence their headlong, leaping rush down the steep descent. Cautiously descending by a rugged pathway amid the most bewildering varieties of fern life, and past lichen-covered rocks and mossy tree-trunks, with all the forest wealth of creeper, trailing vine, rustling foliage, and swaying branches around us, we suddenly come in sight of the stream plunging in one sheer unbroken leap from what seems a nest of ferns and foliage high up in the verdant cliffs above us. The white gleam of the waterfall lightens up the defile with a rare beauty. Halfway down the cliff there is a ledge of glistening rocks—glistening not less with the tossing spray than with the vivid glossy green of ferns and mosses, and trailing water-plants. Magnificent tree-ferns, with the under surface of their fronds gleaming like silver, spread their graceful arms over the dancing waters. The hurrying stream frets madly among the restraining rocks and gushing noisily into eddying hollows, leaping madly over barriers, tossing high in broken spray here, or frantically shooting there in a clear amber-coloured volume, speeds at last exultantly by a series of bounds from ledge to ledge, and disappears in the shades below.

There are several imps of Maoris with us hunting for ferns ; and these, with their ringing shouts, the plashing jets, the surging boom of the big fall, the sheets of spray lit up by the sun into all sorts of rainbow glories, form a scene of joyous life in vivid contrast to the weird, eerie wonders of yesterday. Our spirits are elated. There is a constant din here, too ; but how different to the subterranean noises of the geysers and mud-holes. There is also perpetual motion here, but how unlike the agonized struggling of the boiling waters of the Terraces. Here all is joyous, radiant, expressive of life and freedom ; and all the elements of mystery and the scorching breath of fires are utterly absent.

Retracing our steps with our spoil of ferns, we find the coach for Ohinemutu awaiting us ; and amid the kindly adieus of Kate and the McRaes, the piping bark of Tiny, and the shrill chorus of the noisy natives, we bid adieu to Wairoa, having laid in pleasant recollections that will never fade, and with memories of such varied and marvellous natural phenomena, as I have very inadequately endeavoured to describe.

CHAPTER VI.

Traits of native character—The *wharepuni* or common dormitory—The processes of civilization—Foul feeding—Causes of disease—Attempts at reform in social customs—The primitive carving-knife—The Hau-Haus—The Urewera country, the Tyrol of New Zealand—Captain Mair's description of the hillmen—The Urewera women—Some queer facts—Extraordinary pigs—A whimsical scene—Then and now, a sharp contrast—A stirring episode of the old war—Snapping of the old links—A Maori chief's letter.

ONE of the most pleasing and prominent traits of the Maori character seems to be their hospitality. All authorities agree on this. My own observations would have led me to the same conclusion. At every village or native resort we have visited, we have had ample evidence that they are a hospitable people. The chief edifice in each village is the *wharepuni*, literally the common sleeping-place. It is generally adorned with much carved work of the usual grotesque character. The inmates, which may include half the village, guests, dogs, and even pigs and fowls, lie on either side of a mud passage, each human individual, at any rate, on his or her separate raupo mat, and each enveloped in his or her blanket. Old men and maidens, young men and matrons, alike woo the embraces of Morpheus, indiscriminately mixed and

huddled together. This, of course, is not conducive to a high standard of either morality or cleanliness. It is well that, according to all the accounts recently of the most credible observers, that things are improving in this respect. Of recent years there has been a marked departure from most of the more objectionable old native customs. Both immorality and drunkenness are much less common than they were. We saw quite enough, however, to convince us that there was yet much room for improvement in both these respects. In most villages there always seems to be a tangi, or feast, in course of proceeding. These may be held at any time. They may be occasions of joy or sorrow. They are invariably a part of all funeral rites, and are held as may be dictated by the financial circumstances of the giver of the feast. Food is supplied in profusion to all comers, and gifts given in such unstinted measure that frequently the giver and his family have to endure actual privation for subsequent months, to make up for the extravagance of the outlay.

Recent years have seen a much more cordial friendliness to Europeans engendered than formerly existed. In the north many road and other contracts for public works are now taken up and faithfully carried through by natives. Round the vicinity of Napier and Wanganui, Taranaki, and other centres, partnerships have been formed between Maoris and white settlers; and farms, sheep-runs, saw-mills, and other industries are carried on jointly. The old native dress is giving

place to the perhaps less graceful habiliments of modern civilization. The men affect English fashions not only in boots, ties, coats, and dress generally, but in the cut of their whiskers, and their fondness for billiards, horse-racing, whisky, and other so-called luxuries. We saw dozens of Maoris at Napier in their buggies, springcarts, and vehicles of all sorts. A tall belltopper, surmounting a grizzly tattooed visage is quite a common sight in Auckland or Napier.

The Napier natives were much more pleasant-looking, and bore a more well-to-do air than those of Auckland and farther north. At Napier we saw a substantial farmer-looking Maori purchase for 15s., several hideous masses of stale stingaree or ray fish. It was fly-blown and far advanced in decomposition in parts, and smelt abominably, yet he filled a great sack with the disgusting carrion, and we were told by the vendor that he sold tons of such rank stuff every week to the inland Maoris, and that they liked their fish as some Europeans like their game—rather “high.”

This foul feeding is one prolific cause of disease amongst them. Another one is their foolish disregard of common precautions against changes of temperature. During the day they dress in European costume; but in the evening at the whare, they revert to the scanty drapery of savage life, and sit bare-headed and bare-footed round the fires, and often get a chill.

At Wairoa we saw a whare, in which about forty of all sexes and ages sleep every night.

Every cranny is shut up. Two fires burn on the earthen floor. The sleeping-room is shared with the domestic animals and vermin-infested pets of the settlement. Every mouth in this huddling human hive holds a pipe. You can imagine the atmosphere. You can imagine the effect on even the hardiest constitution, of a change from this reeking pest-house to the cold crisp air of a New Zealand winter night. No wonder pulmonary diseases and malignant fevers annually claim so many victims. It seems to be pretty certain that the race is decreasing, though not so rapidly as is generally asserted.

A circular has recently been issued by the Defence Minister, the Hon. J. Ballance, urging on the chiefs and headmen to use their influence to alter this mode of life, and to bring about salutary reforms in the sanitary conditions of the *pahs*, and with especial reference to greater cleanliness in the selection and preparation of food. This circular has already had a beneficial effect. At Waitotara, even as I write, preparations are being made by the local tribes to hold a great tangi to welcome a distinguished visitor in the person of Tito Kowaru. He was the great fighting chief of the war of 1867, but he is now perambulating the coast country with a large following, preaching peace and goodwill to the *pakeha*, i.e. white man. As a result of Mr. Ballance's circular, strange innovations are being made in the projected feast. A cup, saucer, spoon, knife, fork, and plate have been provided for each antici-

pated visitor, and the cookery will all be after the European fashion. The crockery for the different tribes or *hapus* will all be of different patterns ; and when one tries to recall such a feast in the not very olden time, with its accompaniment of war-dance and possibly sodden or roasted human flesh as the *pièce de résistance*, one begins to realize somewhat the mighty change which is now apparent in the character as well as in the physical surroundings of the Maoris after twenty years. At a banquet given to the Duke of Edinburgh during his visit, some of the big chiefs were seen by my informant to go into the dining-hall, and each seizing a goose, or turkey, or other fowl, proceeded to carve it in fine old savage fashion by dismembering the carcase with teeth and fingers, much as a wolf would have done. These very men now are conversant with silk hats, paper collars, Albert chains, and all the conventionalities of the correct diner-out.

The change is infinitely to the advantage of the noble savage, if, with the conventionalities he could only happily discard the vices and follies of our modern civilization.

I had the good fortune to meet a band of real primitive Maoris at Wairoa. They were Hau-Haus from the Urewera country, and their dress, weapons, and manners were as yet unmodified by European contact. Some years ago Government, for some service or other, had granted the Ureweras a sum of 5000*l.*, and traders were attracted to the wild and almost inaccessible mountain

country. McRae gave us an amusing account of his first trading trip, the recital of which convinced us of two things, viz. that the Hau-Haus must have been a very simple, primitive people, with a very hazy idea of values of such goods as shawls, ribbons, beads, and gewgaws generally. And also that McRae's ideas of profits, and the utilization of opportunities of making them, were quite up to the very highest proverbial Aberdonian standard.

We were also fortunate enough to meet at Ohinemutu Captain Mair, who commanded the Arawa contingent of natives during the big war. He has been in constant contact, official and friendly both, with the natives here for about twenty years, and there are perhaps not half-a-dozen men in New Zealand who know as much of native life and manners and customs as he does. He has one of the finest and most complete collections of Maori *curios* extant, and he was good enough to show us some of his latest acquisitions, and to give us much valuable and interesting information on this subject.

Urewera, says Captain Mair, is the Tyrol of New Zealand. It is not very accessible. There are two ways of penetrating the country. One from the coast near Tauranga, the other from the Lake country. The latter route was traversed by Captain Mair during a recent visit. The road is simply the bed of a mountain river called the Horomanga. It may give some idea of the nature of the country, when it is known that the

traveller has to cross the bed of this river no less than one hundred and eighty-six times before he reaches the uplands.

The Ureweras are lean, lank, active mountaineers. They know the country as a bushman knows the run on which he was born and bred, and they often make almost incredible journeys even on the darkest nights, threading the most dangerous defiles with all the agility and sure-footedness of a goat. They are industrious, too, and indeed most of the pretty flax mats and bags that one sees exposed for sale in shops and among the Maoris of the plains are made by these mountaineers.

They are very excitable and emotional. Indeed, the Maori race generally are easily moved by any impulse, and tears and laughter are never hard to excite, according as their feelings are touched. It was among the Ureweras that the Hau-Hau fanaticism (a strange jumble of Judaistic and Pagan religious fervour) was developed.

Perhaps the most effective proof of their simple unconventionality was contained in Captain Mair's statement that the women make really good mothers-in-law. They invariably back up the son-in-law in domestic broils.

The women are springy, good-looking, and hardy to a degree.

"Do you think the adoption of European dress has an injurious effect on the health of the Maoris?" we asked.

"Undoubtedly. Especially when they adopt

some of the more insane devices of fashion to cramp and distort the human frame, high-heeled boots, for instance."

"I can cite one instance of their hardihood," said the captain. "One woman, during a prolonged and severe march, fell out of the line about nine miles from the destination of her party, for the night. Having given birth to a baby, she walked into the camp the same evening, bearing, in addition to the burden of her newly-born child, a load of firewood, and then she went about her usual work as blithely as if nothing unusual had occurred."

"Similar instances are on record," I said, "among the American Indians, and I have known of like cases among Hindoo coolie women."

"One very strange instance of maternal sympathy," proceeded the captain, "I can vouch for, as it is within my own personal knowledge. One old woman in the Urewera country found herself in milk when her only daughter bore children, and, as the mother could not, this old grandmother suckled her grandchildren herself, and this occurred six times in succession."

"Is it true," asked one of our party, "as I have read in some books, that the Maori women suckle young pigs?"

"A gross libel, sir," says the captain. "An offensive traveller's yarn. I have lived among the Maoris more than most white men, and I never yet heard of a case of the sort, either as regards pigs or any other animal. One doctor who came

here, and who firmly believed the truth of the common rumour, was indeed in danger of coming to serious bodily harm, because he sent to the settlement to try and get a Maori foster-nurse for a little puppy of a favourite, breed whose mother had died."

"Talking of pigs," said our punning friend, "we saw a one-eared pig in Wairoa, and we were wondering if it was the result of accident or what?"

"Oh, such a sight is common enough in every Maori village. Indeed you often see pigs quite earless. The dogs tear or gnaw them off. On the coast the most extraordinary pigs may be seen. They would puzzle any naturalist not acquainted with the cause. The hind-quarters are quite contracted and atrophied. They are shrunken away to infantile proportions. You see a great massive head and front, with brawny chest and ample shoulders. A pig, indeed, with a front like 'The Albanian boar,' but with the hind-quarters of a sucking pig. The quaint-looking brute rears up like a giraffe. His spine is at an angle of 45° . At Whakatane I counted sixteen, all in this condition."

"What is the cause?"

"It is caused by their eating karaka berries. The karaka is the New Zealand laurel (*Corynocarpus laevigata*). These berries contain prussic acid, and seem to act on the lumbar muscles, causing them to become shrivelled up, as I have described."

The toot plant, another very common shrub all

over the islands, has a peculiar effect on cattle or sheep partaking of it. It induces sudden and violent vertigo, partial paralysis, and if taken in any quantity will kill the animal who eats it. A shrub, with a whitish leaf, called the paper plant, is also plentiful hereabouts, and horses who eat of it oftentimes die from the effects.

"There are few deformities among the natives, are there not?" we ask.

"Very few, indeed. Scrofula sometimes has its victims, and is induced by eating rotten maize."

During the whole of our trip we only saw one hunchbacked native.

As we were leaving Ohinemutu we were spectators of a most whimsical scene. It would have made the gloomiest anchorite laugh. Ranged in a row in the middle of the street before the hotel we saw five native Roman Catholic priests. They were bareheaded, and deep emotion of some sort or another was depicted on their countenances. It might have been indigestion, but it looked like woe. The verandah of the hotel was crowded by a miscellaneous horde of semi-civilized savages, and these now began a slow procession, and one by one proceeded solemnly but methodically to rub noses with the five reverend fathers. Many tears fell, but not a word was spoken. Doubtless there was pathos in the tearful silent farewell, but the nose rubbing was too much for our gravity; it was really too ludicrous. It was such a scene as could only be witnessed in Maoriland: the poor flock affectionately rubbing noses with their

respected shepherds. I have seen many a good-bye, but never one like this.

The women folk were not permitted to participate in the nasal osculation. The more modern, if less effusive, hand-shaking was alone vouchsafed to them. They gave vent to their feelings, however, by joining in a wild and noisy saltatory measure in the verandah, accompanied by hoarse shouts, snapping of fingers, barking of dogs, and the crack of whips and rattle of wheels as we rolled away from Kelly's hospitable abode and bade a reluctant adieu to the Hot Lakes and their many marvels.

The drive back through the bush, where we loaded the coach with the most beautiful mosses and ferns ; the cheerful chat with Harry ; the first glimpse of snow on the far distant battlements of Ruapehu and Tongariro, all, all might be dilated on if the reader could but share the raptures of the writer ; but alas ! at secondhand, earth's brightest joys are apt to pall somewhat, and the most vivid and graphic narrative cannot bring up the sensations which make recollections hallowed, and cause the flush of pleasure to mount the cheek and brow, as memory recalls the gladness and joy which have gone, never again, perhaps, to be renewed.

I cannot more fittingly close this chapter of rather fragmentary gossip on the natives than by presenting the reader with an account from one of the local newspapers while referring to the recent turning of the sod of further railway extension through the Maori country. It is the most re-

markable instance, perhaps, I could give, of the changes that have taken place in twenty years' time :—

"The ceremony at Te Awamutu was a pleasing contrast to the scene enacted within three miles of that spot during this very month one-and-twenty years ago. Early in April, when Cameron and Carey were out, word was brought that some three or four hundred Maoris were fortifying a position at Orakau. General Carey at once attacked them with 1200 men. They repelled several assaults, baffled the artillery fire with bundles of fern, compelled our people to proceed by sap, and annoyed them terribly during the process. Before the attack they had declared proudly that they would fight 'for ever, and ever, and ever.' Want of water, failing ammunition, a reinforcement of 400 British, and the slaughter wrought by shells and hand-grenades at last making the position untenable, they marched out through a gap in the investing line left open for the artillery fire.

"'They were in a solid column,' wrote an eye-witness, 'the women, the children, and the great chiefs in the centre, and they marched out as cool and steady as if they were going to church.' A flanking fire galled them as they marched, a swamp lay between them and the Punui River, where was safety. They lost heavily, but many reserved the last of their ammunition for the swamp. They fought their way through with undaunted resolution, and brought away an unconquerable remnant. Half their number had fallen.

"General Carey said, in his despatch, 'It is impossible not to admire the heroic courage and devotion of the natives in defending themselves so long against overwhelming numbers. Surrounded closely on all sides, cut off from their supply of water, and deprived of all hope of succour, they resolutely held their ground for more than two days, and did not abandon their position until the sap had reached the ditch of their last entrenchment.'

"It was one of the finest deeds in New Zealand story. The man who commanded against us in this heroic fight was Rewi, who turned the first sod of the Northern Grand Trunk Railway the other day, within the view of the ground of the great exploit. The gathering was not so great in 1885 as in 1864. But its result will be greater and better. The whirligig of time has given us a most romantic contrast."

It is sad to reflect that one by one the gallant old fighting chiefs are fading away. The links that bound the present age of bustle and progress to the old era of early settlement are snapping fast, and soon it will be quite a rarity to see a tattooed Maori at all. Not long since another of the old celebrities died at the Kaik, Otago Heads. This was an old chief named Waitota, or, as he was more familiarly called, New Zealand Jack. He had reached the ripe age of ninety-two.

This ancient Maori chief had lived at the Kaik ever since the arrival of the ship *John Wickliffe*, as long ago as the year 1848. Jack had been

quite a traveller in his day, had seen a great deal of the world, and altogether led a most eventful life. He was born in the Nelson district, and always held high rank amongst the natives. On one occasion he was taken prisoner during a war between the South and North Island natives, and was then conveyed to the Bay of Islands. After his escape from captivity, he shipped on board an American whaler, and sailed in her to the United States. Then returning again to New Zealand, Waitota joined an English ship and made a voyage to London. He then traded between that port and China for a time, and ultimately joined the ship *John Wickliffe* which brought the first settlers to Otago under the late Captain Cargill. Waitota was really a wonderful old fellow, gifted with a splendid memory, and a fluent tongue ; he could tell one the most interesting stories about the early history of various parts of the colony, and his graphic description of life among the Maoris in olden times was invariably realistic and vivid in the extreme. And so, one after another of the old tribal chiefs are passing away, and with them many a legend and ancient tradition that it would be well to have preserved.

After I had written this chapter I came across a curious document which is of peculiar interest as showing what some of the more powerful and observant chiefs themselves think of the survival of their race. It is a reply from Tuteao Manihera, dated from Kawhia in response to the circular letter of the native minister, Mr. Ballance, before

alluded to :—" Friend, salutations to you. I have received your circular letter pointing out how disease could be averted and the means of preserving health among the native people of New Zealand. Your advice is good. Friend, listen to this. According to the observation made by the Maori people as to the decay of their own people, it is found that formerly, in the days of our ancestors, the natives mostly died of old age. Their whares, their clothing, their food, were very bad. When they slept at night, they used fire to keep them warm, and in the day they basked in the sun, its heat serving them as clothing, and the people never died off. But the arrival of the Europeans to these islands brought disease amongst them, and two complaints made their appearance, namely, chest complaint and cough. From that time the numbers of natives began to decline. Subsequently, another disease called measles, and now fever has come, and rheumatism. Among other causes which have been discovered by the Maoris is that they have been neglected by the ministers, for the Maoris have a reverence for sacred things. In former days, when the chief of any tribe died, before that evil happened, his approaching death would have been known to all by the flash of lightning and the roar of thunder rolling along the mountain-tops of his own district. No matter where the chief was dying, they always knew, and would always say that such-and-such a chief was dying, because that the thunder and lightning were in such-and-such a place. Friend, the

food and clothing are now both very good, but the Maoris are dying off rapidly. This is what I have to say to you:—If you think well of it, let all vessels that come here be inspected, and if any kind of sickness be found on board, let them be ordered to go away, so that we may not catch the sickness. That is all. I leave it to you to judge whether it is right or wrong. Enough.

“Your loving friend.

“TUTEAO MANIHERA, Pihopa.”

CHAPTER VII.

The s.s. *Rotomahana*—Opotiki, a military settlement—A sensible system of emigration—Faults of the Sydney system—A chance for capital—The town of Gisborne—Napier—Public spirit—Projected harbour works—Napier, the Malta of the southern seas—An attenuated army.

WE left Auckland on a Thursday afternoon in the *Rotomahana*. She is seldom driven at her full speed, as the vibration is somewhat excessive. The catering is first-class, and the army of stewards are more than ordinarily attentive and obliging. They are quite military in the precision of their movements. At the sound of a handbell they range themselves in position. At another signal the covers are removed with a flourish. At each fresh signal some fresh manoeuvre is repeated with a precise exactitude which would rejoice the heart of a rigid disciplinarian, and which, in good sooth, contributes much to the comfort of the passengers, and entirely does away with the usual scrambling and disorder at meals on shipboard.

At the bottom of the deep bay which trends southward from Auckland's spacious harbour, and a little to the westward of East Cape, lies the small military settlement of Opotiki. It was formed during the war, each settler in exchange for the fee

simple of twenty acres being liable to military service. Officers got a proportionately larger grant. This is now a flourishing community of farmers and wool-growers.

In some of the country papers I noticed the advertisements of an Immigration Society, which seemed to me to be capable of a useful development in Australia. The idea seemed to be to encourage lads and lasses to emigrate under the auspices of the society ; and it undertook to provide situations for the adventurous youths on their arrival in the colony. Farmers and settlers, desirous of having helps, were invited to send in applications to the local agents, or to the head office ; and, from what I read, it seemed that in return for board and tuition in all sorts of country work, giving "colonial experience," in fact, the new comer was bound down for a term, to his host and teacher. Doubtless such a system might be abused. But under careful supervision, and the direction of genial men of tried probity, would it not be better than the haphazard no-system which is pursued in Sydney and elsewhere? In New South Wales emigrants are often shamefully treated. Domestic servants, indeed, are competed for as if they were prize pedigree stock, but male labourers, artisans, and such like, are often turned adrift without knowing to what part of the country they should go for employment. A labour bureau after the American fashion would be a decided improvement on the present faulty system.

The scheme I refer to as being advertised in the

New Zealand papers seems to have the merit of being in accordance with common sense. The Sydney plan is something as follows :—Here is a young fellow yearning for an opening in the outer world. His parents are quite willing to give him a little money to start him. They cannot give him much ; but what little they can scrape together is precious. It is the hard-earned savings of much self-denial and laborious years. The youth under our Sydney system arrives in a strange country after a voyage, during which he has little kindly supervision, and may be exposed to many sadly adverse influences. He is cast out on his own resources, with less thought bestowed on him, than on the bales of merchandise that travelled out with him in the hold of the ship. He soon finds out the value of his letters of introduction. If he apply to a labour agency—a perfectly irresponsible medium, be it remembered—not even licensed by the State, or supervised in any official way, he may, after considerable expense, succeed in finding employment. He may? Yes! But he may not—most often does not—till his little hoard has vanished, and he is no longer in a position to refuse any offer. Then begins the life in the new world, round which was centred so many roseate hopes and anticipations. The best material in the world would feel cast down, and the lad does not really get the best chance. How many get wearied and disheartened before the battle is well begun? How many sink in the fight, and are lost after all the brave hopes and worthy resolves? But suppose now that on his

arrival he was met and welcomed by some good cheery inspector of such a society as I am referring to. His luggage is looked after for him. He is directed to the lodging guaranteed by the society. He has a list of vacancies put before him, every information as to locality, mode of life, prospects of success in this or that, are clearly and kindly explained to him. His money, if he have any, is put safely out at interest for him. His selection is made. He knows he has some one who will take an interest in him. He acquires his experience, and at the end of two years' time, who can doubt that he is ready to start a career for himself, and become a valuable acquisition to the State?

Methinks there's room for philanthropic, patriotic Australians doing something in this direction, which ought to have been done long ago, which Dr. Lang (fine old Great Heart!) did do, and which the societies I speak of are doing now, in connection with immigration to New Zealand.

I am aware that heartless scoundrels have acted nefariously under the guise of doing all that I suggest; but, under directors of known character, such a scheme would, I think, be a laudable and patriotic, and, I verily believe, might be made a profitable venture. The young immigrants would be in fact apprenticed. In my humble opinion there is far too little apprenticeship now-a-days in every department of human effort.

But a truce to moralizing.

From East Cape to Gisborne, a distance of about eighty nautical miles, one sees but a wild

mountainous country, with a precipitous, rugged coast. This country is as yet exclusively in the hands of natives, if we except the two widely-separated hamlets at Tologa Bay and Waiapu. There is no farming. The settlers subsist by their trade, and barter with the natives. The Maoris themselves cultivate—chiefly maize and potatoes, and a very little wheat at times. This they thresh out in primitive style by the aid of their horses' hoofs. Native wheat in New Zealand can be known, as native indigo is, in India—by the dirt in the samples.

There is a large amount of fine forest-land and many rich fertile valleys inland waiting exploitation, but the coast is very barren. There is a proposal before the speculative public now to form a great popular syndicate and acquire this tract of country by purchase, and then settle it on a communistic plan. Here's a chance for the disciples of Henry George. I would like to see it tried.

Turning round Gable End Foreland, a sheer abrupt rocky face like the gable of a mighty house, a formation, as one can see by the detached fragments and hummocks in the sea at its base, evidently the result of some tremendous landslide, we enter Poverty Bay, in the mid circumference of which nestles the neat and thriving little town of Gisborne.

The roadstead is exposed to south-east gales, and a poor stranded barque, lying battered and broken on the strand, with the exultant waves hungrily licking her riven ribs, proved conclusively

how dangerous these can be at times. Even in this little coastal town, public spirit is ahead of Sydney in at least one respect. Gisborne can boast of a Harbour Board. A loan has been proposed, and plans are already prepared, and will shortly be proceeded with, for the formation of a harbour which will render the anchorage safe at all times. On the substantial wharf are commodious sheds. The streets are wide, planted with shade-trees, and the embankment of the river is strengthened with flourishing rows of pollard poplars. The river winds picturesquely past, skirting the town, and the bridges, footpaths, &c., were all in capital order. There is a capital hotel, kept by Wilson, and many really highclass-looking shops.

A cheese factory has been started here lately, and the cheese I tasted was exquisite in flavour. There is a future for Gisborne. The back country contains magnificent pastures, and the people seem wideawake. The getting ashore was a hazardous feat. The sea was high. The steam launch bobbed about like a cork. The gangway was slung from the ship, and was now high in mid-air, now banging on the funnel, or deck, or cabin hatch of the launch. Luckily we all got ashore and back to the steamer again without accident; and in the evening away we steamed for Napier.

We arrived off Napier, in Hawke's Bay, very early, and caught the first launch. The offing here is too exposed to south-east winds; but here,

too, the Harbour Board is vigilant and active. It is indeed pleasant to see the signs of so much enterprise and public spirit. The sea-shore here is fringed with shifting banks of shingle, which has been carried down from the main range by the swift rivers that tear through the gorges and denude the hill country, on a scale which is, perhaps, paralleled nowhere else on the face of our globe. This moving shingle is carried up by the currents, which set strongly into the bay, and many leagues of lagoon which formerly existed have been silted up by the sea action. In fact, the bold spit, behind which lies the town itself, was formerly an island ; and tradition has it, that Captain Cook sailed between the spit, which was then called Scinde Island, and the mainland, over the very spot on which is now built the trim, bustling town. Port Ahuriri, the merchants' centre, with all its great wool and produce stores, and commodious warehouses, is built on reclamations from the marsh. On the shingle bars, in fact, which have been cast up by the ocean currents. There is still a great body of water in the lagoon inland, and this creates a very powerful scour, sufficient to keep the channel deep and open with the aid of a dredge, which is constantly at work. The workmen employed by the Harbour Board are kept busily engaged raking out and stacking up the great round water-worn boulders, which the tides are perpetually casting on the bank at the mouth of the harbour. Acting under reliable engineering advice, the board propose to build out

a long breakwater into the deep, which would turn the ocean currents, and with the strong natural scour from the lagoon, would, it is believed, keep the harbour clear. The plans provide for a harbour with a depth of thirty-six feet, as the tides are high here.

It was proposed to expend 300,000*l.* on this important work. In Parliament the motion was scouted. But the Napierites were determined. The prejudices of party, the divisions of cliques, the differences of creeds, were all forgotten. Common cause was made, and after a long and sore struggle, the bill was passed, and very shortly the work will be commenced.¹ Already there is an enormous meat-preserving industry flourishing at Tomoana, where the cleanest, most succulent dainties of this description are turned out in a style not excelled anywhere. Large areas are now laid down in tobacco, and this bids fair to become a thriving industry. The Hawke's Bay pastures and crops are famous throughout Australasia. Cheese factories are being established. The frozen meat industry has already attained goodly proportions. Much timber is exported, and the port is bound to become one of very great importance. Already the annual exports have reached the imposing total of 600,000*l.* More power to the Harbour Board, say I, and good luck to the plucky, public-spirited people of Napier.

These same good folks of Napier must surely

¹ Since writing, the plans have been adopted, the contracts let, and the work has been begun.

have sturdy legs. They would need them. The steep, and stairs, and climbing walks, and bellows-bursting paths, beat Edinburgh hollow, and would even, I think, run Malta hard. The town itself, with its shops, hotels, public buildings, factories, &c., is on the flat on the landward side of the spit or mountainous bluff. The merchants' portion, as I have said, is at Port Ahuriri on the seaward side of the spit. But the dwellings of the shopkeepers and merchants are perched high up on the precipitous sides of the hilly bluff itself. They are perched aloft at every conceivable altitude, and look down at you from towering elevations. They crown rugged heights. They line precipitous gullies. They stick like limpets to sheer walls of rock. Embowered amid artificially made gardens they peep at you from shady foliage in places where you would think it hard for the trees themselves to keep a foothold. All the villas and houses are of wood, and really the general effect of this garden crowned, villa bestrewn, precipitous bluff-land is very pleasing. There are many deep cuttings leading to the various ravines, and everywhere wooden steps and winding walks. The extent must be some thousands of acres, some few miles perhaps, but every spot on which by any exercise of ingenuity a house could possibly have been built has been taken advantage of. Napier is, in fact, the Malta of the southern seas, only with all the rich accessories of southern vegetation, and the clear, crisp, glorious freshness of the southern atmosphere.

There is a very efficient water service. Fire-plugs at every corner. The streets are clean and the shop fronts bright, and the municipal watercarts, drawn by really magnificent horses, actually keep the dust laid. Think of it, ye city magnates of Sydney!

There is one hansom cab. The driver is neat, obliging, and moderate in his charges. He hops down to open the door for his fare. He cheerfully assists with luggage. In one corner of the cab is a small hand-bell to draw his attention to the wants or wishes of his passenger. A neat glass panel is provided on which to strike matches. A file of the latest newspapers is ready at your elbow, and in the remaining corner is a handsome horn-shaped vase, with a dainty fresh bouquet of flowers, set in water, and brightening up the interior.

Think of that, ye long-suffering cab patrons of Sydney! Think of it, ye much maligned, courteous, gentlemanly, angelic Bayards; ye never-to-be-forgotten cabbies of Sydney.

The Salvation Army at the time of our visit to Napier had become somewhat attenuated. The officers outnumbered the rank and file in rather too much Mexican fashion. The band consisted of one very uncertain cornet and two blasting—not to say blasted—instruments, whose scope seemed limited to a hard-and-fast slavish adherence to one monotonous sound, emitted in jerks or slabs as it were. The sound would have suited a jungly boar with a bad cough, but was not calculated to rouse any one to religious fervour. Rather the reverse. The army consisted of three instrumentalists, five

red-coated officers, two poor girls in poke bonnets, and as far as we could see one rank and file.

To me it was really a melancholy sight. Nobody seemed to take any notice of them. The row they made was simply exasperating. Yet they tootled away, and sang hoarsely their one tune (it never varied, at least during the four days we heard them), and perambulated the streets with a regularity which surely merited more recognition than it met with.

On Sunday they paraded past the churches, rather markedly as I thought, and seemed defiant in their blare and irreverent noise. It seemed out of harmony with the quiet Sabbath air of the place. The Presbyterian Church we attended was crammed. Every seat was uncomfortably full. The minister, a plain blunt Scot, with an unmistakable accent smacking of the Grampians, gave an eloquent extempore sermon on "The persistent influence of a good man," which was listened to with marked attention. The singing, to the accompaniment of a capital organ well played, was excellent, and most heartily joined in by the crowded congregation. The English and Roman churches seemed just as well attended as the Scotch. On the whole, my impression of Napier was that it is a well-ordered, self-respecting, thriving town; and the pleasant and profitable Sabbath we spent there was not the least enjoyable of the many delightful days we spent during our trip.

In the afternoon we wandered along the shingly beach under the overhanging cliffs, and watched

the breakers come rolling in. We climbed the flag-staff-hill, past the asylum and gaol, and had pointed out to us the quarry and cutting in the hill, where the prisoners are sensibly forced to work, and in part pay for their subsistence, instead of being pampered and kept in easy idleness at the expense of the ratepayers.

Back to church in the evening, where the congregation was just as dense and as attentive as in the morning. On Tuesday we bade good-bye to Napier.

CHAPTER VIII.

The famous Hawke's Bay pastures—Hastings—Maori farmers—Mountain torrents—A backwoods clearing—Wasteful methods—The forest and hill country—Woodville—The famous Manawatu gorge—A curious ferry—Palmerston.

WE determined to travel to Wellington by rail and coach, instead of doing the usual sea passage, as by so doing we would see more of the country, and get a better idea of the progress of settlement in the interior.

As soon as one gets beyond the deposits of shingle on which Napier is built, the train enters magnificently grassed country. Rich paddocks, neatly fenced, and stocked with fine flocks and herds. There are no unsightly stumps such as may be seen in most Australian pastures. No dead timber; no brush fences; no jungle of briar and thistle and prickly pear. There are thickly scattered about, however (as many as three or four in some paddocks), substantial bulky hayricks. Bountiful provision for a year of scarcity or a bleak winter. This is, alas! a sight that may not commonly be seen in Australian pastures. All the paddocks are here laid down in English grasses, and would, I should imagine, carry possibly six, if

not ten, sheep to the acre ; and such sheep, big carcasses, healthy fleeces. They are mostly a Romney cross.

After fourteen miles, during which we cross one or two sluggish rivers, and pass the Tomoana Meat Preserving Works, which are well worth inspection, we pull up at Hastings, which is to Napier pretty much what Parramatta is to Sydney. It seems a neatly kept, flourishing town. There is one fine old church with twin turrets. A good racecourse with new race stand. Hotels, which so far as outward appearances go, are immeasurably superior to the usual grog-shops which in an Australian, country town are dignified with the misnomer, hotel. The streets are planted with shade trees ; and rows of poplars and willows, clumps of firs and alders, and hedges of gorse and hawthorn, with the broad fertile pastures of home grasses, give a wonderfully English look to the place.

After Hastings, the train runs past miles of bare brown hills, with a long winding valley at their feet, raupo growing on its swampy bosom, and there is little of interest for the tourist. The rich rolling downs, the grasses and clover, the splendid condition of sheep, cattle, and horses, the air of rural prosperity, would doubtless have charms for the pastoralist ; but to the searcher after the picturesque it is rather monotonous. I indulge in speculations as to the future, when increasing population will make the land more valuable ; and then, doubtless, these myriads of acres, now lying

unproductive as raupo swamp, will be drained and cultivated, and, who knows, may be planted with rice, maize, tobacco, poppy, oil seeds, ginger, turmeric, safflower, indigo, and other subtropical products, for behoof of the swarming villagers. I feel certain these would grow well here.

At Poukawa, a native village, with a big whare in the centre, the train stops to shunt. Groups of native women lie lazily about, very fat, very dowdy, and very dirty. A troop of school children, about to proceed by rail, are amusing themselves by a noisy game at marbles, and have to break up their game to catch the train, a disruption which gives rise to a very pretty quarrel.

The car platforms are very dangerous for children, having no protecting rails whatever, and the guard informs me that already several deaths have occurred from the consequent accidents.

Still advancing and ascending, the scantily clad hills begin to draw nearer to the line. At the top of a long rise, whence looking back we get a fine view of the raupo swamps and grassy pastures we have left behind us, we emerge into a lovely valley, with two perfect little gems of lakelets, one on each side of the line, nestling still and beautiful under the bright sunshine. Myriads of ducks scuttle across the placid water as we pass, but a number of black swans paddle serenely about, disdaining even to turn their graceful necks to look at us as we whizz by.

Further on in a hollow to the right, shaded by drooping willows, is a college for natives. The buildings of red brick look warm and comfortable.

Here now is a noteworthy sight. One suggestive enough of the changes time is working. What think you? A native village. No Europeans visible. And yet here is a modern threshing machine of the most improved pattern, with all the latest contrivances busily at work, under native guidance exclusively.

Only twenty years ago, these Maoris were quite in the mood to wage war with the settlers on the slightest pretext. Now, the men, in European costume, are busy threshing their grain, in the most approved modern fashion, and the scene is one of cheerful, peaceful rural industry.

What a water-favoured land is this. There is a lakelet in every valley or hollow we pass. At Kaikora, surrounded by grassy hills and rich pastures, the school children get out. Evidence of the popular tastes in amusements is here furnished by the sight of two racecourses—an old and a new one. We get an insight into the staple trade here too, as the down trains for the coast are laden with sawn timber and enormous uncut logs, and also grain. The timber is mostly white pine and rimu.

Is it not short-sighted policy to have no regulations, making it compulsory on timber-getters to replace by fresh plantings this constant depletion? A wise policy would be to have tracts set apart for

new forests, and let fresh planting of suitable trees proceed contemporaneously with the cutting down of the original forests. Is this being sufficiently attended to? I doubt it. I see no signs of it. A few sparse patches of pine are being planted here and there, but nothing systematic or on an adequate scale seems yet to be attempted. But of this more anon.

The train now crosses the Waipawa River, and at Waipukura just such another river is crossed.

These are typical New Zealand mountain streams. Here we have the explanation of the enormous shingle drifts on the coast. This is one of the gigantic operations of Nature, which alters the face of the earth, fills bays, changes coast-lines, and puts at defiance the most skilful contrivances of the best engineers.

At present the rivers are mere shrunken threads winding through their desolate valleys of shingle. But in rainy seasons, or at the melting of the snow on yonder high serrated ridge of mountains, the torrents come tearing down the gullies and carry tons upon tons of silt and shingle and gravel with them; and the roar of the stones and boulders as they roll over each other and crash onwards in the bed of the flooded stream is louder than the angry surges on the tempestuous coast.

Still more trim pastures. A constantly rising, rolling country. The very perfection of land for pastures and stock-keeping. Wire fences by the

league. Turnip paddocks, hundred of acres in extent. Great hayricks here and there, and an occasional mansion peeping out from its plantations of fir and willow. Alas! for the sparsity of humanity. Sheep and cattle cannot equal men.

Now we leave the undulating downs and grassy ridges and enter the bush country. We pass sidings with great logs ready for the trucks. Wooden tramways lead everywhere into the dense forest. Here are magnificent wild wooded valleys and forest-clad gorges; the silence in their deep recesses only broken by the ring of the timberman's axe.

Dashing ever onward and upward, we whizz across a high spidery wooden bridge on fragile-looking trestles, spanning a deep ravine, and now reach Ormondville.

Such a township; with its acres of blackened prostrate logs, its giant trunks and stumps, the clearing fires, the rough backwoodsmen, the lumbering bullock teams, and the distant peep of the wooded hills over the ever-widening circle of seemingly impervious bush. It recalls the stories of Fenimore Cooper; and we could almost fancy ourselves away in the Indian wilds of Canada.

And so to Danevirke, a neat Danish settlement. The same prospect here. Man carving a home out of the heart of the primeval bush, and everywhere the fire completing the work begun by the axe. The sky is shrouded in gloom from the smoke. We are told this is a good burning

autumn. Last year was wet, but this season fires have been blazing for weeks, and of the poor forest, if it were sentient, one might say, "The smoke of its torment goeth up for ever."

No use seemingly made of the potash? No destructive distillation of wood? No pyroligneous acids, or wood tars, or oils, made here? Under more enlightened processes many most valuable products might here be utilized and saved. The whole thing—waste, waste! Want of capital, want of knowledge, want of foresight, want of proper labour, and facilities for marketing. Verily, "the greater haste which in the end may prove the lesser speed."

Possibly I am wrong. This process may really be the cheapest and the best, and the game may be worth the candle in the long run. And yet my soul revolts at this wholesale destruction. It was not so the old planters worked, in my old pioneering days, among the forests in India. Charcoal, tar, potash, oil, resins, gums, battens, spars, planks, even lichens and mosses, were all found marketable; and my forest clearing was made to pay in products for the labour expended. I think, too, of the elaborate care bestowed on plantations in Scotland, in Germany, and elsewhere, and sigh as I contrast the thrift there with the extravagance here.

But of course circumstances alter cases, and I am conscious that under altered conditions such as we have here, I am but poorly qualified to judge as to what is best. And yet such wholesale waste and destruction does to me seem grievous.

At length we reach Tahoraite, the present terminus, eighty-two miles from Napier. The air is keen and bracing. Around us we can see countless leagues of forest country and wooded ranges stretching to the far-off plains below, and climbing in rugged succession, range on range, right up to the topmost peaks of the main mountain chain above us.

The fourteen-mile drive to Woodville is very beautiful. It is through the New Zealand bush. Having said that, I have said enough. At Woodville, the public school and various public buildings were neat, but, evidently, inexpensive edifices of wood—not the extravagant palaces which the cupidity of the electors, the plasticity of Cabinets, and the log-rolling of members have peppered down in every hamlet in New South Wales, where the money might have been infinitely better expended on reproductive works of public utility. But there!! “Off the track again, you see!”

At Woodville you have the choice of three routes. The one, to take coach to Masterton, and thence by rail to Wellington; another to go on through the famous Manawatu Gorge to Palmerston, thence by rail to Foxton on the coast, and then either by coach along the beach, or by steamer to Wellington; or, thirdly, from Palmerston by rail to Wanganui, and then on to the capital by steamer.

We chose the last mentioned, as we had business in Wanganui.

About two miles out from Woodville we begin the never-to-be-forgotten passage of the Manawatu Gorge.

The first view of the river is striking. The valley in which it flows is narrow, and the steep hills on either side are thickly clad with forest. The coach (Jones's) with its three splendid grey horses, seems suspended right over the stream, which rolls in brown, eddying volumes close under the road. It has, in fact, hollowed out the cliff in which the roadway is cut. Down below, crossing an elbow of the stream, is a graceful suspension bridge. On the further side steep pinnacles of rock tower high into the sky, and the defiles look black with shade. A blue haze, like that of the Blue Mountains, shrouds all the distance. The trees are hoary with mosses, hidden and smothered with creepers, and laden with tangled masses of parasitic grass.

The road is barely wide enough for the coach. There is not ten inches to spare at many a jutting angle. Two vehicles could not possibly pass. Even an equestrian must pull up to let the coach pass at certain places, sidings in the rock wall being cut for that purpose. The wall of rock on the left rises sheer up from the road. Beneath, whirls and foams the river in its rocky bed. Over the river we see the blazed line along the face of the precipices which marks the survey for the projected railway. Above, rise terrace on terrace of fern trees. Here a bald jutting rock some hundreds of feet high. Here a dell of glossy verdure. Here a plashing cascade. Here a bare ugly gash in the

steep boskiness, caused by a landslip. Every winding turn discloses some bank or crag, some dell or ravine more exquisitely lovely than the one just passed.

The clang of the hoofs on the hard road, or the boom as we cross a culvert or bridge, echoes from cliff to cliff, and the crack of the driver's whip is multiplied, and reverberates amid the gorges and precipices on both sides of the pass.

Giant totaras, ragged with age, draped with moss and lichen, tower in masses above the lower bush, which is thickly clung with creepers innumerable. The wind howls up the pass, and lashes the pools into temporary fury. The tints, the heights and deeps, the tossing foliage, the swift stream, the mists and shadows, the fringes of ferns over the beetling cliffs, the craggy boundary before and behind, seeming to enclose us in a rocky prison, all form a scene of inexpressible beauty and indescribable grandeur.

Well may New Zealand be named wonderland, and this most glorious gorge is aptly designated one of its chiefest wonders. After miles of this majesty and sublimity, the cliffs open out like the rocky jaws of some Adamantine serpent, and the released river rolls out smilingly and open-bosomed into the undulating forest country outside the gorge.

We cross by a curious ferry. The boat is propelled by the current of the stream itself. A well-oiled traveller runs on a taut wire cable. The current catches the boat at the angle made by the

running gear on the cable, and so the traveller runs freely along, and the boat goes across like a craft under sail.

The forest country here shows all the evidences of frequent settlement, in houses and herds, fences and foreign grasses. There seems to be no crop farming. Stock-raising taxes all the energies of the settler. Even the gardens look neglected. The familiar stumps and prostrate logs, and slovenly paddocks of Australian scenery again meet the eye here.

Burning is going on all around. The air is dense with smoke. Our clothes get white with falling ashes, and our eyes smart with the pungent reek.

Here we pass the railway line again, and we are now in the straggling but thriving town of Palmerston.

Palmerston occupies the centre of a plain, which has been carved and cleared out of the virgin forest. It is well laid out. A big square occupies the centre of the town, and round the square are shops, hotels, and buildings, such as are seen in very few country towns of much greater age and pretensions in the mother colony of Australia. There are several handsome churches. A hall, a public library, several sawmills and factories of various kinds; and the place looks altogether lively and progressive. The railway station alone looks ramshackle, and is more like a piggery or a dog kennel than a station.

By the time the train from Foxton comes up it

is dark, and through the deepening gloom, broken only at fitful intervals by the lurid glare of the forest fires, we are whirled into Wanganui, and put up at the prince of hostelries, the Rutland Hotel.

Shortly after our trip as above recorded, this part of the island was visited with a series of devastating forest fires, which did enormous damage, both to life and property, and made many families homeless. Referring to this, a correspondent in one of the Sydney papers gives the following graphic account of the dangers some of the mail-coach drivers have at times to encounter in the execution of their duty:—

“It is interesting,” says the writer, “in connection with the peculiar weather we have lately had in New Zealand, that the Maoris in one district are just now very busy removing their dwellings to higher ground in anticipation of a very heavy flood setting in shortly. The Maoris of the North Island predicted an unusually dry summer, on account of a peculiar appearance in connection with the flax flowers. It is certain that their prophecy in that case has turned out correct, and it remains to be seen whether this latter prediction of the natives will also come to pass. But the terrible bush fires that have raged throughout the country have been the worst feature of the season, destroying as they have so much valuable property, and in many instances endangering life. On the day previous to that on which I travelled by coach on the same route, and passing through an almost

similar experience which I shall never forget on the Reefton road, the following incident occurred : The coach left Nelson at the usual hour, but on reaching the Motupiko Valley it was found that an extensive fire was raging to the right of the route. Mr. G. Newman (the coachdriver), however, continued his course, thinking that he could keep ahead of the flames. But in this he was mistaken ; for after proceeding a few miles, and reaching a portion of the road where it was next to impossible to turn the coach, he found that the fire was of greater extent than he had imagined, and began to realize the gravity of the danger which threatened him.

"The country behind him he knew to be all in flames, and therefore all hope of retreat in that direction was cut off. His only hope then consisted in his chance of heading the fire, and he accordingly put the horses to the utmost speed, and then commenced a race for dear life. The smoke at this time was such as to almost entirely shut out the leading horses from the driver's view, and the heat growing more and more intense as the great column of fire rolled down the hillside towards the road. The flames were now within a few yards of the roadside, and the paint on the coach began to blister and give out a strong odour, which caused Mr. Newman to think that the coach awning was on fire. But being himself almost suffocated with the heat and smoke, his only thought was of reaching a point ahead, where there was a break in the country, and a small

stream into which he might throw himself, for his whiskers and hair had already been badly singed. The coach swept on at a terrific pace until reaching the point on the route already referred to, where, as expected, the fire had taken another direction, and the danger was over.

"A glance at the coach and foaming horses then revealed how terrible had been the ordeal through which they had just passed for the last mile. The horses were singed fearfully, the paint had peeled off the coach, and the only wonder seemed to be that the awning had not ignited. Mr. Newman will not be likely to forget that journey in a hurry. Probably few other men could have undergone such a trial without losing their senses. Had a burning tree fallen across the road, or had any accident happened to the coach at the great speed at which it was going, there would have been no possible escape from a terrible death for them all. But this is only one instance out of many. One man descended a well in order to escape a raging fire, and had a most miraculous escape from a terrible death, when the woodwork on the top of the well caught fire, and crashed down the shaft, but was happily extinguished in the few feet of water remaining in the well."

CHAPTER IX.

A homely hotel—Hotel management in New Zealand and New South Wales—Sharp criticism—Wanganui, the town—Its fine reserve—Mount Ruapehu—A pioneer settler—Diligent farmers—Great fertility of soil—Signs of prosperity—A coasting steamer—The Rip—Entrance to Wellington Harbour—Panoramic view of the capital—Then and now—Importance of the city—View from Mount Victoria.

WANGANUI, like all the New Zealand towns we have yet seen, strikes a stranger favourably at first glance. Oh, if our Australian hotel-keepers and licensed victuallers were but more alive to the importance of first impressions! The welcome we received at the "Rutland" did more to dissipate our fatigue than even the subsequent ablutions and snug little supper. It was past ten, and we had had nothing since midday, and were, as you may imagine, both tired and hungry. On timidly preferring a request for supper, what a relief to find alacrity, in place of the usual response to which a long travelling experience in New South Wales had habituated us—that response being, generally, something of this sort—"The kitchen's closed, and the cook's gone; ye can't have nuthin." Instead of that we were served with delicious oysters, fresh bread, and beautiful butter, and told

that if we wanted a hot grill or cup of tea or anything, it would be a pleasure to get it for us. The hotel was full, but the kind landlady, Mrs. Parsons, vacated her own room for us, and made us as comfortable as if we had been at home. Nor is this by any means an unusual experience in New Zealand—at Oram's, in Auckland; at McRae's, in Wairoa; at the Criterion, in Napier; here at the Rutland, in Wanganui; and, most notably of all, at Møller's Occidental Hotel, in Wellington; at Warner's, in Christchurch; and the Grand, at Dunedin, we found a civility and attention, a readiness to oblige, and a disposition to forestall one's most trivial wants, which, alas!—and I say it deliberately—are sadly absent in hotels on the Sydney side, with only a few honourable exceptions.

The domestics certainly seem more willing, and whether it be the climate, or better system, or what, I know not, but they are decidedly less lazy than the usual Phyllises and Ganymedes, to whose tender mercies travellers owe so mighty little of comfort or pleasure, in New South Wales.

While on this subject, it is a real pleasure to testify to the good hotel management we have experienced so far in New Zealand. Take, for instance, the bedrooms. It is the rule, not the exception, in bush "pubs" and country inns on the Sydney side, to find a filthy deposit of dirt, organic matter, and other abominations in your ewer and water-jug. The ewer is seldom tho-

roughly washed out, or scalded with hot water, and the basins merely get a perfunctory rub with a greasy cloth after the slops have been emptied. The towels are often in rags, and the soap is seemingly as hard to find as the Holy Grail. Of the condition of the bath-room—when there does happen to be one, which is not often—common modesty and decency forbids me to speak. The defiant disregard of the first principles of sanitary laws in the disposition of closets and other conveniences, shocks the stranger and disgusts every traveller.

“What matter?” muses the publican. “It’s the bar that pays. Travellers are only a nuisance. Them there arrangements wor good enuff for me, ever sence I wor a kid. Oh, hang travellers!—let ’em leave it or lump it. Gim me the good thirsty ’uns!”

Such is the normal state of affairs in many inns in New South Wales. As for the cookery!—that, alas, is simply nasty; there’s no other word for it. The kitchens are polluted and vile. The surroundings are odious. The atmosphere of the bar and common rooms reeks with the odour of stale beer and sickly tobacco fumes. Bacchus in New South Wales is no longer the rosy radiant god, but a combination satyr—part swine, part slobbering Silenus—and wholly repugnant to every clean instinct. Of course, I am not forgetful of some bright exceptions to this description.

Here in New Zealand, however, I have not yet seen a dirty bedroom. The various utensils for

ablutions are gratefully clean. Naturally, with abundant water the baths are copiously supplied ; but then the accessories and surroundings are so clean and comfortable ! The butcher's meat is naturally superior ; but how much is that superiority enhanced by the prevalent cleanliness and the really good cookery ? It is an ungrateful task at all times to find fault, and doubly distasteful when a comparison tells against one's local prejudices and the natural bias one has in favour of home institutions. Still, if I am to be a truthful critic, I must give my opinions on what I observe, honestly and fearlessly ; and I am content to appeal to any traveller who has had experience of hotels in New Zealand and New South Wales to say whether, at every point, the management of the older colony does not lag miserably behind that of the newer colony.

"Bung" is a mighty power in the land ; and the licensed victualler's calling is an honourable and a necessary one. But in the name of common sense and common fairness, let the bargain be observed loyally on both sides. In many cases, as things go at present, the licence is all with the publican to do as he "darn pleases," while the victualling, which the public have a right to expect is ———. Yes, just so, a blank !

But to return to Wanganui. If the visitor wants to have a comprehensive view of the town, let him do as we did, and mount the steep Flagstaff Hill, which looks down upon the river, spanned by its noble bridge on iron piers ; and there, while his sense of smell is regaled with the sweet scent of the

blossoming whins, his ears are ravished with the dulcet chorus of the warbling larks and linnets; let him feast his eyes on the magnificent panorama which unfolds itself before his gaze.

Away from the symmetrical town, nestling round its two sandy knolls, and skirted by the silvery river at your feet, your eyes are drawn as by some irresistible fascination to yonder mighty altar, up-rearing its spotless architecture right away up from the puny brethren around it, till it stands out clear, distinct, sharp cut, in virgin purity, looking like "a great white throne" let down from Heaven.

It is Mount Ruapehu, crowned with eternal snows, draped with samite, and glistening in the sun; and yet so calm, peaceful, pure, that as you gaze, the spell works, and you stand hushed, subdued, and yet with the sense of a great peace within you, as you think of the pure majesty of the Creator of that wondrous pinnacle of light and glory, and can feel that even the tiny lark poised above your head, throbbing with song, has its every feather noted by His all-seeing eye, and that in the boundless infinitude of His love, you too, have the portion of a child.

The larks! Yes, here they are abounding, exultant. What an incense of song! What delightful trills and melodies! What gushes of minstrelsy all around! Daisies, too, peeping up at us with their pink-tipped fringes. And the gorse! Surely we are back in the old country.

A glance below at the wooden town dispels the illusion.

I have mentioned two sandhills in the middle of the town. One is crowned with an old block-house, used now as a gaol ; but which served as a rallying centre, and was intended as a refuge during the troublous times of the Maori war. The other is bare, save for a ruddy brown carpet of sorrel, which looks for all the world like heather in the distance. Both spaces are reserves for the use of the inhabitants.

And in this matter of reserves, how rich is the dower of Wanganui. There is a fine wide expanse of racecourse, with paddocks, grand stand, and offices, all very complete. But round the town, embracing it in a wide semi-circle from the river to the river again, is a splendid reserve called the Town Belt. It comprises 600 acres of fine rich land, partly put down in plantations, partly let out on short leases, thus yielding a revenue to the corporation, and forming indeed a noble heritage for the generations that are to come.

The town has a good water supply from springs and lakes on the rampart of tableland that overlooks the flat on the side farthest from the river. One lake is three miles out, and has only lately been united to the supply. There is a fall of over 200 feet, giving a splendid head of water for service in cases of fires.

Sales of stock are held weekly, at which there is a large gathering of farmers and settlers. Hotels, churches, banks, insurance offices, and shops that would not disgrace George or Pitt Streets, Sydney, all impress the observer with a

belief in the soundness and future importance of Wanganui. The entrance to the river is four miles down, and there is a bar which at present detracts somewhat from the serviceability of the harbour. A long breakwater is now, however, being formed, and will, when finished, extend 2800 feet into deep water. The bar will then be cleared, and it is believed the scour of the river will always maintain an open and deep passage.

We were lucky enough to get a grand drive out into the surrounding country, under the genial guidance of our friend and fellow-countryman, Mr. Peat. He is a genuine specimen of the sturdy, independent Scot, who has carved his own way to a competency, but has not with the increase of wealth gathered any of its hardening incrustations. There is no film over his soul. He will tell you of the early times when he was glad to take the first job that offered. He points out the field in which he did his first day's work at the tail end of a New Zealand plough. And then with simple manly modesty, he tells the story of his struggle with fortune, ending in his being in possession of these rich paddocks—these waving plantations—these comfortable farms—these rolling downs and pastures, through which we ride for miles, and at last alight at the door of his handsome and comfortable family mansion on a height overlooking the town.

The country round Wanganui is wonderfully fertile. We drove over one field of stubble, and the farmer, in whose occupancy was the land, had

threshed out ninety-seven bushels of oats to the acre. The thick second growth of self-sown crop showed that the yield must have been considerably over a hundredfold.

All along this coast, right up to Taranaki, there exists a curious chain of lakes, running parallel with the sea, at a distance of a few miles inland. To the seaward side of these lakes, the country is sandy, light, and not particularly fertile. But between the lakes and the hill ranges, the soil is magnificent. A rich black loam that can grow anything. Only a very narrow strip of country, comparatively speaking, is as yet settled here. All the back-wooded country, the hilly valleys and ranges, are still unoccupied. Room here for thousands of colonists. The roads are in good order. They are under the supervision of county boards, who levy a rate of three farthings per pound on the acreage value. They take the Government valuation for the property tax, as the basis of their assessment. The limit under the property tax is one penny per pound.

Farming here is in a healthy state. It was a genuine pleasure to me to see the trim hedges, the cleared-out ditches, the long clean expanse of well-tilled fields, unmarred by a single unsightly stump or fallen log. In one field we saw the farmer and his men cleaning out an empty dam, and spreading the silt as a top dressing on a bit of poor land. Grazing is, however, the chief industry, and most of the splendidly-grassed paddocks were not so many years ago waving high with the ubiquitous

bracken and manuka scrub. Twenty years ago there was scarcely a hoof in the district, and now my host sells often in one transaction over six hundred head of the finest fat beasts a dealer could pick up anywhere.

Everybody tells me "things are awfully depressed in New Zealand." Certainly I could see no signs of this depression in Wanganui. The signs were absent from Auckland. They were not visible in Napier, and in almost every village on our route we saw only evidences of industry, activity, and progress. Even in Wellington, the much-bewailed depression eluded us still. If this be "the awfully depressed state of things" so constantly bemoaned, then New Zealand, when things are brisk and lively, must have been about the friskiest community and the liveliest country to live in, that all history makes any mention of.

We took passage to Wellington in a little coasting steamer, yclept the *Stormbird*. The steward was really very hospitable and kind, and made a state-room for myself and wife out of the little smoking-room. We were so close to the machinery, that on the experience of that one night, I might surely set up as an authority on clangour and clanking for life.

We sailed in the cheerful company of a dangerous lunatic under charge of a constable. There were also a goodly company of passengers. The case of the lunatic aptly illustrates a phase of journalistic practice which is, alas! too common in

these colonies. How often the legitimate influence of the Press is frittered away, in petty local squabbles, in pandering to narrow prejudices, in fomenting little quarrels, and fostering a strait-laced Pharisaism, all the while neglecting to teach the broader, nobler lessons of the big, broad, throbbing world outside the isolated narrow-minded circle in which the local rag is too often, alas! the weekly apple of discord, instead of being the fruit of the tree of life. The lunatic was declared to be a sane man by the authorities at Wellington. Doctors do differ, always have differed, and probably always will differ. It being dull season with the papers, the case of the lunatic formed the subject of a leading article. The medicos who committed the man at Wanganui took up the cudgels in their own behalf. And now a very pretty duel is raging between the two sets of medicos, while the Press acts as judicious bottle-holder, and pokes up both sides with its traditional impartiality.

Coming through the Straits, we encounter "The Rip," a current running like a mill race, and a very fast and powerful mill race at that. The little "puffer" of a steamer sturdily sets its stout stem against the mad turmoil, and bravely ploughs its way through.

The coast is, as usual, bare and uninviting. The same serrated backbone of hills, with sharp-edged spurs, abrupt ravines, conical mounds, and here and there a bare gable end, where some landslip has collapsed into the sea, exposing the in-

terior economy of the mountain, which a constant shower of loose stones and gravel tries in vain to hide.

The entrance to Wellington Harbour is very bold and striking. The sun is just rising, and a soft haze rests on the ocean. Great toothlike rocky ridges stud the heaving sea, covered with waterfowl, and the long swell dashes with a surly roar amid their ragged recesses, and the gleaming foam contrast finely with their blackness.

Another similar ridge on Barrett's Reef looks like the fossil jaw of some antediluvian monster. Another scattered line of just such black ugly rocks divides the channel, and in the absence of lights, with a battery on either side, and a torpedo service, I fancy it might be made a very hazardous matter indeed for any hostile ship to force an entrance.

As we steam up the broad sound, between the hilly peninsula on the left, and the bold mountain chain on the right, we are confronted with an island lying right in the centre of the land-locked bay. It is at present used as a quarantine station; but would surely form a fine site for an inner fortress.

Away up in the right-hand corner, beyond the island, lies the Hutt, with its gardens, railway workshops, and scattered residences, and the river debouching over its shingly flat between the hills. Right behind the island, with two or three miles of gleaming bay intervening, is the little

village of Petone, nestling under its fern-clad cliffs.

We turn sharp round a projecting cape to the left, and Wellington, the empire city, lies before us. In the lee of the cape we have evidence of the prevailing war scare. On the point a gang of men are busily toiling at the earthworks for the heavy gun battery. Below on the beach a cluster of snowy military tents betokens the presence of other large bodies of men engaged in forming approaches, and in other camp duties.

But can that stately city be Wellington? What a change from the shabby, lowly, insignificant village of twenty years ago.

When I last saw Wellington it looked from the harbour but a collocation of shambling huts, sprawled down higgledy-piggledy along the scant margin of pebbly beach, between the hills behind and the harbour in front. Barring the provincial buildings and Parliament House there was scarcely an edifice of any pretensions to be seen. We were rowed ashore to a landing-stage, rickety and green with slime, among blackened piles, on which was built the Empire Hotel, then the fashionable resort of visitors. The town consisted of one long straggling business street, known as Lambton Quay, with a few weatherboard dwellings perched here and there on the terraced hills behind.

Now! The wizard wand of progress has waved to some good purpose during the twenty years that have elapsed. Under the auspices of the

Harbour Board, a spacious strand has been reclaimed from the shallows of the bay. The massive wharves stretch out their welcoming arms into deep water; and ocean giants like the Coptic yield themselves to the friendly embrace, and pour forth their argosies of freight on the ample structures.

A stately post and telegraph office, with a fine clock tower, boasting of mellow chimes such as I have heard nowhere else in Australasia, confronts the visitor; and around it rise pile on pile of ornamental buildings, block after block of commodious warehouses, showy *façades* of offices, rows of shops, and all the usual bank buildings, customs offices, and general surroundings of a busy, thriving seaport. And all these occupy the site of what was deep water twenty years ago. The Supreme Court buildings, the Government, insurance, and other offices, the enormous wooden structure surrounded by its gardens (said to be the largest wooden building in the world, under whose roof the various Government departments find shelter) are all built on reclaimed ground. There was not a vestige of all this when I last saw the infant city.

Square massive blocks crown the heights. Here the hospital; there the Catholic college. All along the sweeping semi-circle of guarding hills, the continuity of villas, terraces, and gardens is broken by the spires of handsome churches, or the ridge line of important institutions. The site for the great central prison, with its tall chimney, and

ever-varying groups of labouring convicts, burrowing at the face of the cliffy banks, levelling the mounds, and filling up the hollows like so many Gargantuan ants. The elegant spire of St. Peter's English church; the high scaffolding of St. John's Scotch church, rising like the Phoenix from its ashes of two years ago; the Catholic church of St. Joseph's; the Catholic cathedral of St. Mary's; the dainty spire and turrets of St. Andrew's Scotch church, boasting the prettiest interior of any church in the colonies. All these, and others, look down on the busy town below, and point one's thoughts upward to the purer realms, where the tricks of trade and the sordid pursuits of earth find no abiding place.

Wellington owes much to its Harbour Board. Geographically speaking, it occupies a most important position, and must always be a shipping centre, as it commands trade routes to every coast of both North and South islands. The railways, too, are being pushed vigorously forward, and all the wealth of the Wairarapa Valley, and the rich lands to the north along the Manawatu railway now in course of construction, must inevitably find their *entrepôt* in Wellington.

From the harbour one gets but a cramped idea of the extent of the town. One sees nothing of the dense array of houses which fill the Te Aro Valley, which stretch in long streets away for some miles towards Island Bay, and which huddle together in the narrow valleys up behind the first terrace on the backward hills.

The best idea of the extent of the city can be gained by ascending Mount Victoria or Flagstaff Hill. It is a pretty steep pull, but the view from the summit amply repays you for your exertions.

How the city seems to open out the higher we ascend among the gorse and rocky spurs. Every valley is now seen to be full of houses. The harbour opens out into numerous long bays. The calm ocean (for, wonderful phenomenon for Wellington, the winds are lulled and the day is placid) lies spread out before us in all its bewitching beauty, flecked only here and there with a few small craft, lying idly rocking on the glassy surface. The long grey sweep of the rocky peninsula terminates in a busy swarming scene, where the gangs of men are lustily working at the fortifications. Beyond rises the abrupt ridgy backbone of hills which bounds the harbour to the southward, and following their craggy sweep from the lighthouse, the eye reaches the smoking valley of the Hutt, where the reek from the railway workshops rises in a murky cloud into the clear sky. The island nestles in the foreground like a fragment of the surrounding hills dropped into mid-harbour. Behind, we see the scarped cuttings in the cliffs; and the busy steaming trains running to and fro, disclose the meaning of these rigid, uncompromising lines, which at first puzzle one, and look like the trenches of an investing army.

Then comes the long semi-circular array of serried streets, noble buildings, imposing blocks,

and the busy motion of the quays in front. It is, indeed, a grand panorama, and well repays the climb.

There is a chorus of melodious larks making the air alive with song ; and beneath our feet little daisies in rich profusion smile at us from the close-cropped turf. Great splashes of gold reflect back the sun rays with almost a blinding radiance from the hillsides around, where the gorse is burgeoning forth its yellow glory ; and the air !—so clear, so crisp, so exhilarating ! No wonder the children have such ruddy cheeks, and the maidens such bright eyes and bonnie faces, in Wellington, the Empire city, as its citizens love to call it.

CHAPTER X.

McNab's gardens—The Rimutaka railway—The Fell engine—The gorge itself—Grandeur of the scenery—Power of the wind—The Wairarapa Valley—The town of Masterton—An antipodean hermit—Mr. Kohn's curios—The Belmont Viaduct—Meat-preserving industry—The various stages—A social blot.

THE "lions" about Wellington are not numerous, but they are well worthy inspection.

McNab's Gardens, at the Hutt, are unique in their way, and in the season can boast of the very finest display of azaleas, camellias, and especially rhododendrons, probably to be seen south of the line. McNab himself is a fine specimen of the good, thrifty, gentle-mannered, practical old Scottish gardener. His buxom wife partakes of the practical also; but nothing delights the worthy couple more than to do the honours of their floral domain to any one who betrays a curiosity to look and learn.

What memories gardeners must have; real gardeners, I mean. Not the frauds and shams, who invent names on the spur of the moment to hide their real ignorance, and whose assumption of infallibility is at times so exasperating.

McNab showed us pines, palms, lilies, flowering shrubs, from Japan, Brazil, India, Africa, Europe,

all growing "cheek by jowl," yet in graceful groupings and telling contrast, and the name of every one came as pat as petitions to a mendicant, and was accompanied with quaint little bits of description and touches of humour, which made the old man's tale most enjoyable.

On St. George's Day we took advantage of an excursion train at a marvellously cheap tariff of 7s. fare, to go over the world-famed Rimutaka railway.

Englishmen make very little fuss over St. George. What a fuss and fuddle Scotchmen sometimes make over their dinner to St. Andrew ; and, of course, we all know that St. Patrick's memory is embalmed in the heart of every Irishman, and annually honoured by an amount of green ribbon, whisky, and eloquence, which none but an Irishman could compass. But St. George ! Well, really, there was very little bustle in Wellington on his account on the date I write about ; and the banks were the only institutions that seemed to hold his memory in any special esteem.

The excursion train was but poorly patronized, and, punctually at 10 a.m., we started in most inauspicious weather. It rained heavily, and the clouds were low, and the air raw and chill. We steamed through the mists and driving rain, away round the harbour and up the valley of the Hutt, past rural farms and rich pastures in the valley, and the river at our feet rattling noisily over its shingly bars.

Past Silver Stream, a pretty station, we begin

to approach the bushy defiles and half-cleared flats, where settlement is more scanty and recent than in the lower valley. "The forest primeval" still holds its own stubbornly here, and only a few unsightly patches of slovenly clearing on the hill-sides show that the pioneer has begun to make his mark. These first rude beginnings of settlement are so like the schoolboy's first writing lessons—grim, unsightly blots and thick strokes! Never mind; the fine penmanship will come in time.

When we come to the Upper Hutt, the outlook under the depressing influence of the dull weather is not inspiring. There is a neat little church, but that about exhausts the neatness. Farming has retrograded here during the last five years. A big timber trade was formerly done; but the forests have been denuded, and a wilderness of black stumps are all that remain to tell of the former bravery of foliage. A wave of dullness has swept over the place, and it languishes for the want of energetic workers and possibly a good-natured banker or two.

From Kaitoke we have two engines, and make a steady ascent through some forest scenery of striking beauty. The look back, across the valleys and down the wooded glens, is most romantic and beautifully diversified.

At the top of the steep, the Fell engine is attached to the train, and takes us down the terrific decline to Cross Creek. There is here a raised centre rail, and the engine is provided with some intricate and ingenious mechanism which grips

this centre rail, and so minimizes the danger, and gives additional power. I was informed that only on the Vesuvius Railway and on one incline on the Alps is there such a steep gradient as here, and that it is only on these three lines that the Fell engine is in use. Not being an engineer I cannot vouch for this.

At all events the Rimutaka gorge is a sight which once seen can never be forgotten. Critics of the carping sort say that the line should never have been brought by this route at all. They tell you of two alternate routes of easier grades and much more suitable for traffic. All I can say is that for the tourist, the Rimutaka line offers attractions which are positively enthralling. The curves are very abrupt. The pace is rapid enough to make standing on the platform dangerous, as the oscillation is extreme; but the scenery is thrillingly grand.

The clear, brawling stream dashes along at the foot of the embankments, with here and there an abutment of logs and gabions stemming its impetuous rush, and diverting the insidious waters away from their work of undermining, and overthrowing the labours of the engineer. Some of the glens are stupendous in their depth. Two slender, spidery-looking chain-bridges span the stream at two different gorges. The bosky hills seem on fire, as the steam and mist curl and wreath their ghost-like fantastic columns aloft through the dark canopy of matted creeper and dewy fern fronds.

Anon the sun bursts through the driving scud, and for an instant the gleam and glitter, the sheen and radiance, the play of glowing brightness and gloomy shadow, are positively bewildering, and superlatives are exhausted in the attempt to render any of the faintest conception of the absorbing witchery of the fairy display.

Through a long, dark, curved tunnel we dash. We spin across the narrow neck named Siberia, where at times the wind shrieks like as if all the squadrons of the "Prince of the Power of the Air" were hurling themselves upon the rugged rocks in the attempt to dash them into pieces. Great stones hurtle through the air at times. It was here that terrible accident took place, when the train was lifted bodily from the track by the hurricane, and many lives were lost. Since then the naked spur has been protected by high, strong barricade fences.

But what a work has this been! How could the surveyors have possibly come down these beetling cliffs? What a wild chaos is here! Crags, cascades, towering heights, and dizzy steep. It beats the western ghats of Bombay for wild majesty.

And the mists! Those columns of vapour on the steep mountain sides. "He but toucheth the hills and they do smoke." Look up or down the gorge as you will, we seem shut in from the outer world as by the fiat of some fell magician, with impassable barriers of the wildest rock and forest.

Ho! ho! a beneficent wizard to the rescue. See through yonder rift in the hoary glen the distant plains of Beulah. The sun blazing on the Delectable Mountains beyond, and nearer, the gleam and sparkle of a great lake. What a contrast! Down there a picture such as one dreams of when fancy conjures up pictures of the plains of Heaven. Behind, looking away up to the mountain tops, they are literally hidden in "clouds of thick darkness," and so majestic is the whole that the mind is overwhelmed with its grandeur and sublimity, and quite unfit to analyze it into its component parts.

We descend swiftly now into the famous Wairarapa Valley. The great lake now takes on a muddy hue. It is like an inland sea of dull olive green. The dun manuka hills around, and swampy flats bordering the lake, seem very tame after the majesty of the mountains and solemn grandeur of the gorges.

The Wairarapa Valley is famous for its pastures. The centre of the valley is poor land, mostly shingle and sand. The lower valley, however, and the hollows alongside the hills are very rich. It is well populated and dairy farms and factories are numerous. The land about the lake wants draining. The lake itself is the property of the Maoris, and they are agitating now for permission to prevent all European interference with their riparian rights.

The towns in the valley are Featherstone, Greytown, Carterton, and Masterton. At Carterton is

an extensive saw-mill employing over two hundred hands.

At Masterton are three flour-mills, and the town is bustling and seems thriving. The school was undergoing enlargement. There was not a house to let in the place, and we noticed several new buildings in process of erection. There are numerous streams here in which trout-hatching has been successful. There is a capital institute and reading-room, and an efficient fire-service. Ladders are slung in prominent places along the main streets, for use in case of fires. They are supplied by the different insurance companies. This is a good idea surely.

We had a good lunch at Elkins's Club Hotel, and got back in the dark to Wellington about seven o'clock, and had our usual comfortable and hospitable reception at the Occidental.

Another celebrity that must be seen in Wellington is the far-famed Island Bay Hermit. Some mystery attaches to this ascetic individual. He lives in a miserable, cold, bare cave, lies on the bare stones, and, while accepting food or clothes from his visitors, rejects all money offerings. Herein he differs from his Oriental prototype, the Fakeer or Yogi. Possibly the dreary past holds its horrid secrets for him. He converses intelligently enough on current topics. At night occasionally he comes into one of the newspaper offices in town, where he is supplied with mental *pabulum* in the shape of a great bundle of mutilated exchanges. Over these he pores, and possibly he

may one day astonish the world in the rôle of a new Mahdi, or Peter the Hermit. At present he is an object of curiosity with the many, and certainly, with some, an object of pity and kindly interest.

If the visitor wishes to feast his eyes on an exhibition of perfect good taste and exquisite skill in arrangement, let him visit the atelier of that artist in arrangement of curios—Mr. Kohn, the jeweller, on Lambton Quay. Mr. Kohn has a wonderful and most complete collection of Maori and Island weapons, cloths, and other curios. They are arranged round the walls of an upper room, where the light streams softly in through stained windows, and the courtesy of Mr. Kohn is on a par with his good taste. The room is a wonder. It is something unique. Dr. Buller has another splendid collection of Maori curios which I much regretted I was unable to see, although Captain Mair had most kindly provided me with a letter of introduction to the worthy doctor.

The museum and botanical gardens, too, are worthy a visit.

Another object of interest, too, I had the good fortune to behold, under the guidance of its constructor. This was the Belmont Viaduct, erected on the Wellington and Manawatu Railway about a mile from Johnstonville, by Mr. Morton Danaher, the contractor, from the design of Mr. H. P. Higginson, the engineer to the company.

The bridge is said to be the highest viaduct, built exclusively of timber, in the world. So that Wel-

lington boasts the possession of the largest wooden building and the highest wooden viaduct, as is alleged, which the world contains.

The viaduct is raised on sixteen concrete basements. It contains 212,000 superficial feet of kauri timber, and there are thirty-five tons of wrought iron used up in bolts, nuts, washers, and straps alone. At a distance it looks like a gigantic web, or the puzzle of a dreaming geometrician. It is 170 feet in height, above the stream, and the span over the valley is 185 feet. The erection of such enormous lengths gave occasion for a display of fertility of resource on Mr. Danaher's part which is, I think, well worthy of record. It is a sample of what is being done, in hundreds of cases, by our cousins at the Antipodes to conquer nature, and a good illustration of the dogged fight which has to be waged before modern civilization can subdue the wild forces and primæval difficulties which confront the hardy pioneers of progress in these new lands.

All his sections were built on the ground on the side of the hill. The problem was to place them *in situ* without the aid of ruinously expensive scaffolding, and, at the same time, without undue risk to his workmen. Every log had to be laboriously dragged up steep hill-sides, along the bed of a mountain stream, and over ground which would have daunted the resolution of most men.

How, then, did he manage?

Thus. Having built his section on the ground

he raised it bodily into its place by a vertical lift.

But how did he get his vertical lift? Well, that was the clever idea! He sank a tunnel into the rock on each side of the valley, and made a T shaft in each tunnel, and in this shaft set a huge beam. Through the beam he rove a strong wire cable, and then hauled it taut across the valley, and on it put his blocks and tackle, and thus without scaffolding raised his structure, section by section, and so the wonderful erection rose without accident or mischance into being, and now stands a marvel of skilful contrivance, and a lasting tribute to the resourcefulness and energy of the genial and gifted contractor.

My visit was not wholly engrossed with beholding the wonders in natural scenery. My tastes lie also in viewing the practical, and inspecting the industrial.

So it was that we were glad to avail ourselves of an opportunity afforded us of being shown over the Gear Meat Preserving and Freezing Company's works by the courteous and intelligent superintendent, Mr. Oldham.

The Gear Company employs altogether about 250 hands. They have made arrangements for turning out 4,000,000 lbs. of tinned and preserved meats during the coming year. They are turning out at present over ten tons daily, and they are the only firm, I believe, in Australasia who have successfully laid down corned beef in London to pass the Admiralty standards at Deptford.

The men were engaged putting up Government supplies for her Majesty's navy at the time of our visit. Considering the nature of the material being operated on, the cleanliness of the works was wonderful.

We were first shown into the boning-room, where mighty carcasses were being stripped with a deftness and celerity only begotten of long practice. The bones were bundled off to boiling-down and glue works outside the town. Some of them are used to make rich stock for the soups.

The second stage is that wherein the flesh is put in pickle tanks to extract the superfluous blood.

Thirdly, it is next blanched by being loaded in an iron cage, which is worked up and down by machinery, and dipped into boiling water. The attendants forking in the huge masses of flesh with great steel forks was a new sensation, and the forks would have suited "Blunderbore" of Jack the Giant-Killer renown to a nicety.

Fourthly, it was then, after being cut to requisite sizes, filled in hot into the cans, which have previously all been made on the premises by a staff of experts, and have been scalded in hot water, and thoroughly cleansed.

Fifthly, the cans are next subjected to enormous pressure, ingeniously applied by a patent arrangement of turn-screws at a long table, capable of pressing many tins simultaneously. Each can has to undergo a pressure of three tons to the inch, and the process is a patent of the company.

The tinsmith now (sixthly) fixes the heads of the cans in, and solders them down. A small orifice is left purposely in the top of each can.

The cans are now (seventhly) placed in the preserving vats in the cooking-room. Here the heat was rather tropical, though the smell was most appetizing. The lightly-clad workmen, with their clean white caps, hurry to and fro, bending over the seething, bubbling vats, like magicians busy over some magic cauldron. There is the puffing, piffing, paffing, plop plop, of incessant ebullition, and the cans in their simmering bath, steam away each from its tiny aperture like so many independent miniature steam-engines. The medium in which they are immersed for half their bulk has to be a dense one to keep down ebullition and lessen evaporation, and so a mixture of muriate of lime and fat is used. When sufficiently cooked, the orifice in the lid is soldered up, and the cans are next subjected to a further treatment in a bath of a higher temperature. Here one or two will occasionally burst with a terrific report and to the grievous hurt of the attendants. Happily such accidents are rare.

They are then plunged through an orifice into a bath of cold water, cleaned, painted, labelled, and a neat finish given to the exterior, which at last assumes a most attractive guise.

The tin-room was perhaps the most interesting one of the whole factory. The whole work was so neatly, cleanly, and expeditiously done that it

was a treat to witness the regularity and method so apparent in every department.

But we have lingered too long over our descriptions and must leave Wellington. One painful thing obtruded itself on our observation. We saw more drunkenness in Wellington than in any city or town in New Zealand. Whether this be a permanent or but a passing and transitory phase of the social life of this fine town I cannot say, but it is the only reproach I feel called on to record.

We saw many deplorable cases of open, brazen-faced, flaunting drunkenness, and sad to say not a few of the lamentable instances were those of really well-dressed, respectable-looking women, evidently workmen's wives, probably mothers of families. Alas! alas! under such circumstances is larrikinism to be wondered at?

CHAPTER XI.

Bank's Peninsula—Port Lyttelton—The changes of twenty years—A transformation—The great tunnel—The graving work—Christchurch, the city of gardens—Its homelike aspect—Hard times—Colloquy with a croaker—The philosophy of the matter—"The good time coming."

AFTER Wellington, Port Lyttelton is our next halting-place, and memory is busy as it carries me back along the eventful line of twenty-one years since I landed on its steep and stony strand. The view from the steamer is very fine. The snowy mountains are the same. The hazy bulk of Bank's Peninsula looms ahead as if barring our farther progress as it did of yore, but the individual Ego, the I, how different! As the morning mist lifts we see the deep light, beyond which lies the cathedral city, Christchurch. The tall spire is faintly discernible, surrounded by other leafy spires of poplar and pine, and tiny wreaths of blue smoke rising in spiral columns into the grey air of morning. Behind, rise the silvery spurs of the snow-clad Alps. They glitter like burnished armour in the rosy light. The hills and steep braes of the Peninsula are brown and bare, but the snow has a homelike look, and

seems to gleam with a kindly welcome to the returning wanderer.

Now we near the Heads. Dear me ! How I remember the clustered rigging, thick with immigrants, as we clung to the shrouds and gazed on the land we had come so far to see. What changes since then ! How many have gone down in life's fight and been trampled into the dust of forgetfulness. How many are scattered far and wide over the earth's circumference, for I have met shipmates in far-apart places. How very few have weathered all the storms and reached the quiet haven of cosy opulence and middle-aged leisure. Ah, well ! it is the way of the world, and my fight is not by any means over yet.

The changes in Port Lyttelton are little short of phenomenal. What was but a bare harbour, with a shingly beach, on which we had to step from watermen's boats, which plied between ship and shore, is now a magnificent port, with an enormous embracing breakwater, with stately wharves on massive piles, reticulated with a network of rails, along which the busy locomotives snort and steam. Trucks laden with produce are propelled merrily along. Great sheds line the shores. A big terminal railway-station skirts the sea-face, where once the waves lapped the strand. A noble observatory crowns the promontory above. The quarantine-station is bright and gay with houses and gardens. The town runs its open streets up the steep hill and the houses overflow into every nook on the hill-sides and jostle each other almost into the water.

A great area has been reclaimed. Old stone warehouses have been pulled down to make way for the railway and locomotive sheds, and a blackened, smoky archway, low down near the great graving dock, shows me the sea-end of the famous tunnel through the towering mountain, which Moorhouse projected, and which had not long been begun when I arrived in the colony.

Then, Lyttelton was but a little village of weather-board huts. Now it is a crowded town of gable-ends peeping up in serried rows all over the hills. Alas! the cemetery on the hill is more densely peopled now, too, than it was then.

The tunnel is 2870 yards long, and brings all the Canterbury plains into direct touch with the sea. The magnificent back-country of New South Wales is as yet in a worse plight than the plains of this little province. The railway system of Sydney practically stops short of the sea by a weary gap of two or three miles; so far at any rate as passengers are concerned. What a bitter satire on the vaunted wealth and energy and enterprise of Sydney blood!

The Graving Dock is another achievement of which the Canterbury people may well be proud. It is over 400 feet in length. In fact we saw the fine steamer *Kaikora* berthed high and dry in the dock, getting a new blade put on to her screw. The *Kaikora* is 420 feet on the keel, and the dock could have taken a much larger vessel than that.

Dashing through the tunnel, we emerge into Heathcote Valley, after five long minutes of Cimmerian darkness. For once in my colonial life I ride in a clean smoking carriage. It is worthy of record, that fact. The spittoons in the floor are burnished as bright as a new shilling, and the cushions are spick and span. There are tablets for striking matches ; the atmosphere is sweet. The saloon is more like a club smoke-room than a railway-carriage. What a contrast to the piggeries on N.S.W. railways !

Through the valley, the Avon winds amid its drooping willows, and on the great plain the city spreads its symmetrical streets, and its houses embosomed in gardens.

Christchurch is *par excellence* the city of gardens, groves, seminaries, churches, and artesian wells.

Climb the Cathedral spire, by all means, and enjoy the view. The Avon winds through the town. An outing in one of the dainty pleasure skiffs, on its limpid waters, is one of the pleasant experiences of the place. From the spire you look down on busy streets stretching from a common centre, and each one as it nears the circular town belt loses itself amid villas and gardens and poplar groves. Such a *rus in urbe* is surely unique. Over the Avon are groups of quaint old-world-looking buildings. Some are built of a dark-blue stone—some of a warm red brick ; but all seem fragrant with old memories and hallowed with the sanctities of studious life. They

suggest cloisters, quadrangles, libraries, groups of grey professors, and throngs of grave-lipped students.

There are old ivy-covered churches, too, that seem to have been picked out of old English towns and dropped down here. Yonder is an old belfry tower, weather grey and lichen-covered. Surely it has been transported bodily from some corner of Lichfield or York.

The schools and colleges are thickly scattered over the flat beyond the river. I remember when it was a wilderness of marshy sedge tussocks and flax-bushes. Now the architectural triumphs would do credit to any cathedral city at home.

The Museum, under the able curatorship of Dr. Julius von Haast, ranks as the finest in all Australia. Indeed, the collection in some respects is not inferior to that of any European capital.

The Botanic Gardens and Park are exquisitely laid out, and set off by the silvery, ribbon-like Avon, which purls gently along, meandering through the groves and ornamental lawns.

The ocean bounds the view on one side, and far away, verging the plain, the snowy Alps fringe the picture with their glistening crests of spotless white on the other.

It is a beautiful panorama. One could easily fancy himself back in the old country. But the sights are soon exhausted, and the flatness is apt to become "just a leetle monotonous."

Warner's Commercial Hotel, in the Cathedral

Square, was our caravanserai. No home could have been more comfortable and no host more hospitable. Warner is a host in himself, and his gentle-mannered nieces do the honours of his house with a grace and geniality that makes one feel sorry to leave the home-like atmosphere of the place.

The autumn winds, too, had swept the leaves from the deciduous trees, of which there are more here than in any New Zealand town; and the bare branches added to the English look of the place. Altogether Christchurch is the most English-looking town we have yet seen at the Antipodes; and, as it was the object of the fathers who founded the settlement, to transplant a slice of England bodily into their new garden ground, they are to be congratulated on having so successfully accomplished their purpose.

Notwithstanding the prevailing cry of dull times, the streets were thronged with cosily-clad and well-fed crowds; the shops were full of customers; the theatre was well patronized; and a general well-to-do air was apparent everywhere.

I only found one croaker. He complained bitterly of the bad times; but when I asked him where lay the blame, he was rather hazy as to how to allocate it.

"Was it the Government?"

"Well, no! He believed they were doing their best. Of course there used to be more public works going on; but then these were finished, and no Government could always be putting up public buildings."

"Was it the banks?"

"No, he didn't know much about banks, but he believed they was pretty liberal, too."

"Was it employers?"

"Well, no. They were just as bad off as any one else."

"Would he like to go back to the old country?"

"No fear," very energetically. "Times was bad, no doubt; but, Lor' bless ye, they wasn't anything like as bad as they was at home."

And so, boiled down, it all came to this—Times were bad. That must be true, because everybody said so. But how bad were they? Men had fair wages, comfortable homes, were well clad, well fed, could afford tobacco, and other little luxuries, and yet—and yet, they were not happy.

The fact is, as it seems to me, just about this. People were too extravagant while the good times lasted. Fat contracts and big public works cannot last for ever. Even big reckless loans must have an end. The period for payment of interest comes round with unerring regularity. The time must come when steady industry must apply itself to reproductive works. Lands must be tilled, and ploughing is not so showy as tunnelling and bridge-building. Grasses and cereals must be sown, but returns are slower than from big contracts. "While the dollars roll in let us spend them. Sufficient for the day is the evil thereof." Such seems to me to be the general philosophy of these recurring hard times. When wages are high and work plentiful, the fat kine are slaughtered and eaten

right off, rump and stump ; and not even a scrap is salted down to eke out the scanty fare that must inevitably follow, when the evil days of the lean kine come upon us.

I believe that while there is a certain amount of depression in New Zealand at present, it is but temporary. The resources of the country are only in the birth throes of their exploitation. Well for all concerned if the lessons of thrift, self-denial, frugality, and the necessity for hard continuous effort, be learned now, from a temporary depression, than from the dry rot and stagnation of a widespread national deterioration and exhaustion.

Christchurch has stirring times, and a bright busy future before it yet, beyond a doubt, else the Anglo-Saxon is played out, and there is no more virtue in beef, wool, and grain. So long as grass grows and water flows, and industry merits success, so long will Canterbury flourish, and the cry of bad times from lazy croakers will have as much effect as the idle wind that wastes its energies on the sands of the desert.

CHAPTER XII.

The majesty of the mountains—The great Canterbury Plains—Ashburton, a city of the plains—Then and now—The Rangitata River—Progress of settlement—Timaru—The surf—The olden time—The city of to-day—A triumph of engineering skill—The giant mole—Its construction—The engineer's description of the work—An old chum—"Once a mate always a mate"—Calling the roll—A vivid contrast.

ON a bitterly cold morning, and under a dense heavy pall of leaden cloud, we start on our journey across the great Canterbury Plains towards Timaru and Dunedin.

The plains are composed chiefly of shingle, with a scant herbage of tussock grass. Here and there, alongside the line, are young plantations of English oak and Australian blue gum. Stubble fields, hedged in by long rows of gorse, stretch away on either hand for miles. Already (May) the winter ploughing has begun in places. The majestic range of the snowy Alps bounds the great plain to the right. What a burnished splendour! what a dazzling glory! as the sun bursts through the pall of cloud! Could anything be more beautiful than these eternal solitudes of snow? The absolute purity—peace—rest. What an emblem of the soul's repose after purification from life's mire and unrest! The rattle of the train hurts and jars. It

is so incongruous with that pure holy majesty of the pinnacled snow. Little wonder that mountaineers are generally reverent and religious.

Now we cross the rapid Rakaia over a very long wooden bridge. At every country town in the South Island among the most prominent features are the great granaries and stores of the New Zealand Loan and Mercantile Agency Company. They seem to be ubiquitous. The company provide weighbridges and platforms for their customers at all the large stations free of charge. The neat churches, too, are a constant feature. Here is a malthouse; there a flour or saw-mill. Here again is a granary; there is a woolshed. Seed-cleaning machinery is of frequent occurrence; so too are steam ploughs, traction engines, reaping machines. Indeed, all the most modern forms of agricultural labour-saving appliances are common sights. The faces we see are ruddy and fresh and brimful of intelligence. Corn-ricks and farmhouses stud the plains.

Through the Rakaia Gorge we get a peep beyond the snowy barrier into the inner mountainous country. The gorge discloses ever a grander succession of snowy peaks and glistening glaciers. A region untrodden by human foot, and sacred to the sway of nature's mightiest activities. It is a sealed workshop, where Titanic forces are ceaselessly at play.

Now, far ahead, the white buildings of Ashburton gleam in the sun. It is verily a City of the Plains. We find it a busy, thriving centre of a populous

farming district. There are numerous plantations of blue gum, and the town itself is very scattered and rural-looking. Poplars are prominent; and, indeed, this regard to tree adornment is a very pleasing feature of all New Zealand towns. Would it were so in New South Wales.

Twenty years ago I rode through Ashburton. It was then a bullock-teamster's camp. There was a "bush pub." and a blacksmith's shop and a police hut. These constituted the township then.

Now, look around ! See the tall brick chimneys, the gas-works, the wide streets well lined with spacious shops and public buildings, hotels, churches, institutes, and even a theatre. Handsomely laid-out reserves and well-wooded parks, enormous wool and grain stores, coach factories, wool factories, butter and cheese factories ; public library. I may well rub my eyes ! It seems all a dream to me, that memory of the lumbering bullock team, ploughing its weary way over shifting shingle and through boggy hollows.

Across the sprawling river, where many a foot-sore bullock has been swept down to sea in the gone-by times ; and many a swagsman has found a watery grave ; we now spin gaily along over another very long wooden bridge—past gardens, nurseries, farms, plantations, hay-ricks, and threshing-mills, we dash. Mile after mile is left behind, till at Ealing, some seventy miles from Christchurch, we dip towards the bed of the fierce Rangitata, which we cross by another of the characteristic timber viaducts. The milky water,

treacherous and swift, comes dashing down from its snowy source amid the glaciers, carrying its rolling burden of shingle with it. The bridge is protected by flanking buttresses running up stream. These are simply wooden coffer-dams filled with shingle and boulders. What a wild waste of shingle bars and drifted wrack fills the valley! The stream runs now in myriads of silvery threads; but in flood-time what a mad surging rush of foaming water is here! It is then fully two miles across and resistless in its might.

The snowy peaks are now shrouding themselves in misty mantles, as if to protect their hoarded crystals from the Sun-god's seductive touch. The plains below are bathed in sunshine, but far out to seaward, Heaven's murky battalions are gathering, and the air is hushed and still, as if presaging an impending storm.

At Orari, with its snug farms, and belts of plantations, the train disgorges a vulture-like crowd of betting-men. A little ramshackle erection, which local pride has dignified with the title of grand stand, decorated with bits of bunting, sufficiently discloses the attraction which has brought the jackals hither.

Betting and gambling blights the kingly sport here, as it does so much all over the colonies. The degrading influence of the betting-ring lowers the moral tone of the country, and vast sums are withdrawn from legitimate uses to keep in luxury a set of unscrupulous parasites who batten on industry and clog the wheels of healthy progress.

On we hurry through a splendid farming district. Past Winchester, with its neat villas and trim gardens ; past Temuka, with its handsome white-spired church and Gothic schools, its well-stocked farms and plethoric corn-yards ; past Arowhenua, with its Maori village, and another mountain stream brawling over its bed of shingle. On, with accelerated speed, through magnificently cultivated farms, rich swaths of stubble, and ample evidences on every hand of rural wealth and thriving settlement. I have rounded sheep over every mile of this country in the olden time, when there was little else but flax, raupo, tussock, wild pig, and unbroken ground. Verily the times have changed—and happily. Men are surely better than wild pig, and smiling farms than lonely shepherds' huts.

I am fairly lost in delighted wonder, and we are glad when the train rolls into Timaru, and we get housed in the comfortable Grosvenor Hotel, and find time to draw breath, and try to realize the infinite alterations which have taken place in twenty years of busy colonial life.

* * * * *

Time has indeed made many changes here. When I last visited Timaru, I sailed up from Lyttelton, in a small coasting tub of a steamer. There was a terrific ground swell off the open beach of shingle, and the breakers rolled their curling crests landwards with a roar and crash like thunder. All landing, both cargo and passengers, was done in huge unwieldy surf-boats. And it

was a very rare experience, indeed, to get ashore with a dry skin. The boats—big and heavy as they were—were not unfrequently tossed aloft like chips, and sent rolling up on the shingle, bottom upward like so much driftwood. Lives were not unfrequently lost and goods often sacrificed.

The village boasted then of only a few shops, one or two warehouses along the beach, and less than half a dozen inferior hotels. The *Timaru Herald* of that date was published in a very small weatherboard hut, quite detached, and perched on a waste hillock overlooking the ocean. The very hill itself has now disappeared, to make room for the railway, and the *Herald* is much more suitably housed. At that time the streets were fearfully and wonderfully made. Bullock teams might be stuck up in the main streets until the townspeople came to the assistance of the teamster to dig them out. All the houses were of wood, and were set down very much at random. When the annual races were held, the young bloods and station hands "from all the region round about," "The boys" from the Mackenzie country, the sawyers from the Waimate, the half-breeds and "cockatoos" from Temuka and the Arowhenua Bush, and all the "flotsam and jetsam" from every accommodation-house within a radius of fifty miles used to come into town, and for a lively week or two high saturnalia used to be held.

At that time Timaru had the reputation of being the fastest, most racketty, riotous township in the South Island. Verily, I could a tale disclose

of some of the mad, harebrained escapades of "the boys" that would scarcely be believed in these more prosaic, steady-paced, and orderly latter-days. It certainly was a rough time, and a rough place then. But now, how changed !

Timaru has grown into a city. Solid blocks of stately shops, warehouses, and offices now line the principal streets. The hotels are quite up to metropolitan form. The very hills, as I have said, have been levelled, and stately churches, a theatre, convent, schools, banks, mills, a massive post and telegraph office, and countless cosy homes and handsome villas now stud the slopes where I have erstwhile seen the peaceful sheep quietly browsing among the tussocks.

When I first recollect the place, the post-mistress has been heard to say to the young telegraph clerk : " I hear you had a telegram through this afternoon ; why didn't you tell me ? " Yes, in the primitive time the advent of a telegram was quite an incident. Now in the palatial post-office the service is conducted by an army of clerks and messengers. The hospital is really a magnificent stone building, and second to none I have yet seen in the colony. A great part of the bleak hill, on which stood the Royal Hotel, has been cut away to form the railway-station and shunting-yards, and quite a large area has been reclaimed from the relentless surf.

Now, had any one twenty years ago told me that those shifting masses of shingle, those travelling acres of rattling roaring boulders

could be arrested, and that the fury of those terrific surges and angry waves could be tamed, I would have laughed the idea to scorn as the vain imagining of a foolish visionary. And yet the seemingly impossible has been accomplished.

Timaru, owing to the genius and skill of Mr. Goodall, her harbour engineer, can now lay claim to being a safe port, and big steamers and stately ships can lie close alongside her wharves and discharge their passengers and cargo in ease and safety. How has this been accomplished?

If we saunter down to the beach and look around at the massive blocks of concrete, we will see how the fury of the angry surf has been defied, and how man's genius and perseverance has completely conquered some of the mightiest forces in nature.

The long-reaching pier, or breakwater, is indeed a triumph of constructive skill. The problem of forming a secure harbour on the face of an open coast, is difficult in any case; but when to the usual difficulties have to be added

"The long wash of Australasian seas,"

as the billows of the Pacific come thundering in on the strand of shifting shingle, which makes the New Zealand coast one of the most baffling and unpromising sites in the world for engineering operations, the immense arduousness of the task which Mr. Goodall had before him, will be recognized at a glance. Does it not say much for the energy and pluck and public spirit of the

community which had set its heart on having a secure harbour, in defiance of shingly drift, and roaring surf, and all the antagonism of wind and wave and treacherous coast combined? Verily, the lesson of such courage, and resolution, and inventive resource might well be applied by more highly favoured communities nearer home.

Fortunately, material for the manufacture of concrete blocks was plentiful and handy. The shingle was forced to become the instrument of its own subjection. Vast wooden tanks were formed along the beach, and cement and shingle were shovelled into these, and in time the embracing wood was knocked asunder, and giant blocks of concrete stood revealed. Some of these weighed upward of thirty tons. An enormous travelling crane was then moved up, and the block was gripped in its Titanic clutch, and slowly carried outwards and dropped into its assigned position. The whole was then cemented together by more concrete. In vain might the angry surges dash against that callous mass. In vain might the shifting shingle with a snaky hiss, seethe and toss around the unyielding block. Bit by bit the solid rampart grew, side by side the mighty blocks showed a firm immovable front to the baffled waves. It boots not to tell of the numberless contrivances brought to bear on the task by the cunning skill of the engineer. Amid interruptions and partial breaks and a ceaseless war with the forces of nature, that properly viewed, completely eclipses the fabled battles of classic mythology,

the good work went steadily on ; and now, after the lapse of so many years, as I stood on the broad massive immovable rampart, listening to the hungry surge as it rushed impotently against the majestic buttress of the protecting pier—as I saw the sheltered ships idly rocking in calm security, and remembered the surf-boats and tossing cockle-shell of a steamer of the former times—I felt indeed that here was a triumph worthy of the age—a prodigy of beneficent achievement that sheds a lustre on the name of humanity.

* * * * *

Mr. Goodall, in his own modest way, thus writes me regarding the great work which will henceforth be associated with his name :—

“ It had always been the wish of many of the leading residents of Timaru and neighbourhood to construct a safe harbour for Timaru, the hindrance to which seemed to be in the great force of the waves and the large quantity of shingle travelling on the coast. An experimental groin was constructed by Mr. Balfour, and reports were obtained from many leading English and colonial engineers. The experimental work was first buried in shingle, then washed away shortly after it was constructed ; and the reports of the engineers were directly opposed to building a solid structure from the shore. The Harbour Board were not satisfied, and, as a last resource, called for competitive plans for a harbour scheme. That of the present writer was chosen, and was approved of by a Government commission. This scheme proposed to construct

a solid breakwater of concrete blocks thirty-six feet wide, reaching to half-tide in height; then capped with a monolithic concrete block of about five hundred tons in weight. This wall was to extend to about 1000 feet from low water-mark in a north-east direction, and then turn in a northerly direction 700 feet or 800 feet; it was to be six feet above high water spring tides, and would have twenty feet of water at spring low tides at the extremity. The work was started and succeeded, withstood the force of the waves, and was not swallowed up by the travelling shingle, which was swept back by the backwash of the waves. This backwash is caused by the reflection of the waves from the face of the mole; it sweeps back the approaching shingle, or retards its advance, and by its action the shingle line adjacent to the breakwater has been stationary for the last four years. When the works were carried out 1000 feet, its success was so self-evident that the Harbour Board determined to extend the mole another 400 feet, and the cant to the north to 200 feet, and also to strengthen the section. It is also proposed to build a mole from the shore on the north towards the extremity of the cant, and so produce a nearly enclosed harbour. The area of this harbour will be 180 acres, and when completed, will be perfect and commodious. Now, although only a small portion of the cant has been built, along with the straight mole from the shore, accommodation gained is already invaluable. Vessels of 1000 tons can anchor to the lee of the break-

water in perfect safety, can also come alongside the wharf attached to the breakwater, and load and unload with perfect ease and great dispatch, even when there is a heavy sea running and breaking over the breakwater. All this has not been obtained without some trouble, for at times the angry seas have knocked about the concrete blocks as if they were of wood, and on one occasion threw down 100 feet in length of the mole, distributing the blocks over the bottom to forty feet from the line of works. This portion of the work had not been capped with the monolithic block, which would have bound all together. It is notable in this work that whatever has been finished with the coping, has in no instance ever given way or subsided, in spite of the many violent seas that are so prevalent. The concrete blocks used, weigh about thirty tons each, and are placed in position with perfect ease and expedition by a large travelling steam crane that has been tested to forty-five tons. This crane weighs 120 tons, and is worked by one man. There are two of these cranes in the works. They were both manufactured in the colony.

The works will cost, when the present contract is completed, extending over 180 feet further, 210,000/. The Board are applying to Parliament for another loan, 100,000/., for prosecuting the works; but this will not complete the works as designed.

The success of this work has tempted Napier, in the North Island, to try a similar scheme, the con-

ditions of sea and travelling shingle in the two coasts being almost identical. During last session of Parliament, powers were obtained for 300,000*l.* for the works, and a start has already been made."

* * * * *

To resume my personal narrative.

At fitful intervals during my world-wide wanderings, I had now and again heard a scrap of news about some of my old companions of the long ago Timaru life. Of the kindly group which used to sit round the table in the old station, in the peaceful and prosperous squatting days, how many had gone down under the waters of oblivion. Of the rollicking old hands that used to applaud my songs in the vast shadowy woolshed, when the busy day was at an end, and the flickering light from tallow pots with some blazing rags in them, cast a Rembrandt-like glare on the swarthy faces around, how many had "pegged out" in the game of life! How few survived! Thus I pondered as I idly strolled down the street, when suddenly I bethought me that one of the old station hands had found an anchorage in Timaru, and was now reported to be a wealthy burgess and a well-to-do livery-stable keeper.

Away then I hurried to King's stables. There sure enough, with, I could almost have sworn, the same Glengarry cap, though hair and whiskers were now frosted and grizzled—there stood old Jim King, the "orra man" of the station in my younger days. Jim was a douce shrewd plough-

man from, I think, Donside, and many a day he and I had pushed and pulled the heavy cross-cut saw, or wielded axe and maul together in the Otaio bush in the olden days.

Jim's astonishment when I greeted him by name was very amusing. He did not recognize me; but remembered me when I asked after the young cadet he had known so long ago. My interview with poor Jim was worth all the pilgrimage, and before I left Timaru he brought most of the surviving friends of my early days to see me.

Ah me! these meetings in after life; are they not full of pathos? What a record of deaths and failures, as we call up the muster roll which memory suggests.

How essentially colonial, too, these chance meetings. How quickly the comradeship is formed. How soon, may be, to be sundered, and yet "once a mate always a mate" in the colonies. We had not seen each other for over twenty years, and yet the old bush, the wool-shed, the whare, with its idle group of Crimean-shirted, black-bearded stockmen, shepherds, bullock-puncher, horse-breakers, fencers, and general rouseabouts, as they used to muster on the quiet Sunday, all came back to us; and as naturally, as if no time had since elapsed, big with changes to both of us, we reverted to the old days; and long-forgotten names and incidents came to our lips, as eager query and rejoinder passed between us.

"Old Donald; you remember him?"

"Oh, man; poor old beggar, he's still alive; but over eighty. Living with so-and-so."

"And old Jack, the bullock-driver?"

"Oh, he went to the diggings. I lost sight of him."

"And George A——?"

"Went to Australia. I hear from him occasionally."

"What became of Harry ——?"

"Man; he went all to the bad. Broke his neck one night coming home from a spree."

And so we called the roll. Some were drowned. Some lost sight of. Very, very few had been prosperous. Many were dead. Some had left the country. How strange it all seemed to recall the past, and for the moment feel as if all the busy years had not been, and that we were shapely, active youngsters once again.

Alas! I saw that poor Jim was a cripple on one leg from a fall, and he surveyed the uncompromising rotundity of my substantial middle age, and we felt that

Limbs grow auld, and hair grows grey,
However young the heart may be.

There is good hunting round about Timaru. Three packs of beagles are kept. The hares are enormous in size, and the jumping is good. There are a fine set of hearty fellows in the Timaru district; and, for a change from the sweltering heat of New South Wales in summer time, a month or two's residence in Timaru would be delightful.

In a street leading up from the post-office is a monolith, which is sure to be pointed out to the visitor. It is commemorative of a gallant act of British daring and generous self-sacrifice, and is worthy to be recorded. On the tablets, which face three sides of the pillar, you read—

This Monument
is raised to commemorate the generous
and noble self-sacrifice of those who
gladly encountered the peril of death in the
heroic endeavour to save their
fellow-men on Sunday, the 14th May, 1882,
when the *City of Perth* and the *Benvenue*
were wrecked at Timaru.
“Greater love hath no man than this
That a man lay down his life for his friends.”

From the other tablets one learns that nine of the noble, self-sacrificing band perished, including Mills, the harbour-master, and Blacklock and Gardener, first and second mates of the *City of Perth*.

Timaru altogether was an intense surprise to me. I could scarcely realize the changes. The village had become a city. Nothing more forcibly brought home to me the marvellous progression of the age in which we live, and the resistless vitality and boundless resources of our race.

And what a contrast—to turn from the thronging streets, the crowded pier, the hum of commerce, and din of busy industries, and lift one's eyes to the calm white crests of the Eternal Hills. There they stood, ever the same, solemn and majestic in their changelessness. They blazed

up their burnished pinnacles like pyres of flame in the still air, amid their drapery of mists, and trailing wreaths of cloudlets, and the intense vividness of their immaculate whiteness, is the memory of Timaru that is now most indelibly fixed on my mind.

CHAPTER XIII.

"The old order changed"—A fine farming country—A literary pedlar—Otago scenery—Wealth of water—The Clutha country—A colonial manse—The minister's lot a hard one—Kindly relations between pastor and people—Tree-planting—Slovenly farming—An angler's paradise—Gore township—The Waimea Valley—A night ride.

WE started from Timaru on a bright sunny day, and passed first through a magnificent farming district. Ploughing was being actively pursued, and myriads of friendly gulls were following the plough, and finding fat delicacies in the upturned furrows. My eye follows the old track, along which I have galloped "many a time and oft," astride "the old chestnut," in the golden days of my youth. At that time there were only two houses between "the head station" and the town. Now, villages, hamlets, and farms stud the countryside as thick as blackberries. The fight was just beginning then, "Sheep *v.* Settlers," and sheep have lost the day. Settlement here is most complete, and the evidences of rural wealth are everywhere abundant.

At Makikiki, for instance, I find a snug village. A steam threshing-machine is at work in a field close to the railway station, and as far as the eye

can reach, it follows farm after farm, and takes in cottages, corn-ricks, trim plantations, hedge-rows, and busy ploughing teams in its comprehensive survey.

When I was last here, Makikiki was purely a flax swamp, with not a human habitation within miles of it; and it was only famous as being a grand shooting ground for ducks.

Waimate too! I remember when there was but the home station here, one "bush pub.," and forge, and a few sawyers' huts. Now the dense bush has all been cut away. Waimate is the terminus of a branch railway, and can boast stores, hotels, and buildings equal to most country towns—verily "the former things have passed away, and lo, now all things have become new."

We cross the Waitaki, one of the snow-fed rivers, by another lengthy bridge, and I recall to my mind the old punt which used to convey passengers precariously across in the olden time. Oamaru presents the same amphitheatre of grassy knolls, but the tussocks on the heights are gone. Villas and gardens have taken their place. The town looks gay and lively, the white stone giving it quite a palatial look. What enormous stores! What mills! woollen factory! cheese factory! saw mills! &c. In fact, a repetition of Timaru. Another breakwater in the bay. All this since I was here last.

Ascending the steep incline, we emerge upon a succession of broken, tumbled slopes. Grand farms here. The farmers are lifting their potatoes

and the long rows of well-filled sacks testify to the fertility of the soil. We pass the famous quarries of white stone, and looking over the surrounding country, can see numerous evidences of volcanic action in the circular mounds which stud the landscape. Sites of extinct fumaroles and geysers these.

Away to the left the Pacific reflects the rays of the afternoon sun. Moeraki Lighthouse glistens in the warm light, and the sheen sparkles on lovely bays, and glistens along the wavy line of great curling breakers on the beach.

Yonder is Shag Point jutting out into deep water. There is a colliery at work at the extreme verge of the headland. Otago is rich in minerals, and her coalfields are important and extensive.

Palmerston is a pretty town in a hollow, surrounded by hills, low and undulating. The Salvation Army has been doing a great work here. The leaders were two lasses, and they have succeeded in enlisting a large following, and have shut up several hotels. So we are informed by a polite, though pale young gentleman, who makes himself very pleasant, gives us much unsolicited information, and winds up by wanting to sell us a few celluloid cuffs and collars.

In self-sacrificing gratitude, we pass him on to a burly farmer, who eventually, on our recommendation, purchases a set, and doubtless made a very good bargain. This peripatetic peddling we find to be a feature of the railways here. The pedlar is generally employed by the leading newspapers to

secure lists of passengers and odd items of news ; but he will sell you books, periodicals, refreshments, wild ducks, and other game shot by himself, and, as in this case, celluloid collars and cuffs. I daresay the young gentleman would have insured our lives, or taken our portraits had we been so disposed ; and he possibly would have been able to arrange for our funerals in case of an accident. We live and learn. Literature, commerce, and sport, here go hand in hand.

At Puketeraki there is a small native settlement of about fifty adults, and here we pass the first native bush we have seen to-day. This is one of the very few remaining native settlements in Otago. There are only now some six or eight families. "How are the mighty fallen !" No more war dances and freebooting forays, ending with a cannibal feast nowadays. The men farm a little now, and subsist on the keep of a few sheep. ;

We are now nearing Dunedin. Through the gathering gloom we can see the white gleam of curling breakers on the cliffs beneath us. We are dashing along at a breakneck pace above the moaning sea, midway up the cliffy heights. The scenery here, we are told, is very grand and awe-inspiring. We can well believe it, but alas for the veil of darkness which hides each charm from view. Soon we see the motley heights of Port Chalmers ; anon, the long serried rows of lamp lights in the steep streets of the great city itself. They look like the watch-fires of a great army, bivouacking among the hills. The train rolls into

the station. We are in Dunedin. Hey ! for the comforts and luxuries of the Grand Hotel ; and, as we are very tired, we hurry off to bed. Dunedin is worthy of a chapter to itself, and we will not pause now, but continue our trip to the lakes, and return to Dunedin later on.

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Leaving the straggling station, the city opens out towards the sea, at Ocean Beach. A great flat of reclaimed land is here being rapidly built upon, and at Caversham there are many good shops, and nice houses.

Forbury Fort, one of the new defences, is rapidly approaching completion, and will protect the city from any bombardment by a hostile cruiser seaward. Above the fort the most prominent landmark is the stately mansion of Mr. E. B. Cargill, whose father was one of the pioneers of Otago, and founders of Dunedin. A monument to his memory graces the great space in the centre of the city. We dash rapidly, with a shrill scream from the engine, through a long tunnel, and on the farther side come in view of the numerous buildings of the New Zealand Drug and Chemical Works. The country around consists of open grassy downs, and at the foot of a high conical wooded hill nestles the neat little village of Burnside. It is a typical Otago village. There is a very pretty church, a large tannery, a fellmongery, a wool mill, with its long flume or water-race on high trestles, carrying water to the noisy, sparkling wheel. All the valleys

and slopes around are dotted with bright houses. A sluggish creek meanders through the marshy reaches of the lower valley, broadening as it goes, till near the beach it widens into a lake, which gleams like silver in the morning rays.

Another long tunnel leads us now into a richly cultivated valley with numerous farms, the thin scraping of snow on the low-lying hills betokening that winter is at hand.

In this valley lies Mossgiel. Its tweed factory is favourably known all over Australasia, and the products of its looms have achieved a reputation for excellence, equal in its way to those of the famous West of England fabrics. Beyond the tidy trim-looking village rise bold hills, white with their winter vestments. The whole scene, with its snug farms, peaceful herds, clean-cut stubble, trim hedge-rows, and smiling village in the plain, and the white solitary grandeur of the lone silent mountains beyond, affords one of those sharp enjoyable contrasts which are so characteristic of New Zealand scenery.

As we move still further south, evidences of the abnormal rigour of an exceptionally early and severe snowstorm are everywhere apparent. The valleys are all flooded. Shattered trees with broken branches cumbering the ground, give the orchards a mournful look. The very flax and raupo clumps have been broken and flattened, and in many straths the stooks are rotting in the sodden fields. And this is only the early part of May.

Now we skirt Lake Waiholā, generally a clear shallow bed of water, averaging a depth of about twelve feet. It is now muddy and turbid, and swollen with the floods from a branch of the Taieri River, which flows into it. A piercing wind comes whistling over the Taieri plains, and lashes the lake into mimic mountains.

Oh, could I but transport this wealth of water to poor drought-smitten Australia. "Water, water, everywhere" here. Lakes, streams, standing pools. Great shallow meres, with crowds of wild ducks, stooks standing in water in many of the fields. The bare brown hills, and cheerless stubbles, all dank and sodden with the plashing rain. All the noses in the carriages are blue. Our feet feel like lead, and it is very hard, indeed, to resist the depressing influence of the cold.

At and about Stirling there is a lakelet in every hollow, and the snow is lying very low down on the hills. Near by, at Kaitangata, there are some rather famous coal-mines, which are being vigorously opened out and worked.

We are now in the Clutha district. All the settlers are Scotch here, with but a few exceptions. They are deep-chested, big-headed, ruddy-faced people. Kindly hearted and keenly intelligent, they are the right stamp of men to found a noble nation.

The Clutha country is prettily diversified and more wooded than the long ranges of dun hills and undulating slopes we have been passing hitherto. The Clutha River is a broad stream,

swift and brown with flood. The town of Balclutha is unhappily situated on a flat, which is liable to inundations from the river. Four years ago the bridge was washed away. The churches are very ornamental, and form a noticeable feature here, as indeed they do in every settlement in Otago. The early fathers evidently did "not forsake the assembling of themselves together as the manner of some is."

A few more miles, and we alight at a quiet little wayside station, where we are hospitably met by the minister of the parish, a younger brother, whom I have not seen for several years. We are soon snugly ensconced in the cosy little country manse, and the evening is devoted to asking and answering such questions as the reader can well imagine embrace a wide range of subjects.

I spent the greater part of a pleasant week with the good young minister and his comely, buxom wife and bonny black-eyed bairnie. The quiet, homely atmosphere of the manse, the hearty greetings of the kindly, simple country folks; the peace and quiet of the secluded "pairish" were inexpressively grateful, after the hurry and bustle of city life; and yet a little of such life would go a long way with me. A country pastor's life is no bed of roses in the colonies. The roads in winter are shockingly bad. The parish generally is of great extent, and the mere physical labour involved, in faithfully discharging pastoral duties, such as ministering to the sick and sorrowing, would tax severely the energies of a strong, robust

man. He has to preach three times on Sundays, in three different centres, and must keep up his studies if he is to be a faithful and successful minister. He is often called upon to undertake duties outside his own parish, and the cares of schools, church organizations, presbytery and synod meetings, are exacting and incessant. He must take an active part in all social movements in his neighbourhood, and beside his own immediate daily troubles, must have a ready ear and sympathizing heart for every tale of sorrow or distress that may be brought to him. With the education and tastes of a gentleman, he must be ever among the people—of the people—a ministering, comforting source of strength and enlightenment to his people, reflecting the temper and character of the Master whose servant he is. And, alas! how often is he fated to have his motives misinterpreted; his best and purest intentions misrepresented; his brightest and holiest aspirations sneered at and maligned. The wonder is that so many highly cultured, sensitive men are found for the office of the ministry, when worldly callings offer so much more tempting and tangible inducements.

It was peculiarly gratifying to me to see the cordial relations that existed between my good young brother and his flock. The stipend of an Otago clergyman is but 220*l.* a year, no more than the salary of a good clerk; but this sordid view of their position does not present itself to the young fellows I was privileged to meet, and

the kindly regard and affectionate esteem of the farmers and their young folks are immeasurably above all money value. The relations subsisting between people and pastor were much more like the old home life than anything I had yet seen in the Australian colonies.

A great spiritual work is being done in these remote little country places. A really pretty new church had been built in the south half of this parish, and opened free of debt. The young people especially had been wakened up to a lively interest in the higher life, and both by precept and example the young ministers I met in this part of New Zealand were approving themselves "good workmen, needing not to be ashamed." They take an active, intelligent part in secular matters, as well as sacred, and are a credit to the good old true blue Presbyterian stock.

A good impulse, for instance, had been given to tree-planting in the parish, the minister having set the example by adorning the bare spaces round the manse and church; but many other good impulses were working far beneath the surface, and producing good fruits of unselfish acts and purer lives.

Amid all the crudities and falsities of modern infidelity, the sneerings and scoffings of indifferents, and contemptuous isolation of Pharisaic sectarians, it was positively refreshing to get into this warm atmosphere of Christian-loving regard for each other between pastor and flock, and I can never forget the heartiness of the welcome

I received from these shrewd yet simple farmers, just because I was the brother of their minister.

The roads were awful, as I have said, but equestrianism is the favourite mode of progression here. Every youngster has his horse, and is usually followed by a motley retinue of dogs, who wage incessant vendetta against the ubiquitous rabbits. Ploughing was general over all the downs. Potatoes were being dug up, and stored in winter pits. Occasionally the smoke from a peripatetic threshing-machine would darken the air round some busy farm, and at times can be noticed another less pleasing smoke, as some slovenly farmer adopts the wasteful agency of fire to get rid of his surplus straw. Frequent cropping of the same cereal, either oats or wheat without rotation, has produced its inevitable result in some places here, as it will elsewhere; but why farmers anywhere will disregard the plain teachings of experience and common sense, goes beyond my comprehension. The straw which is so foolishly burnt might be used in an open courtyard to give comfort and warmth to the farm animals in winter. It could be cut up into chaff and mixed with chopped roots and a little salt, and in this way form a valuable fodder. Mixed with lime and earth, and allowed to rot, it forms a valuable fertilizer. But to burn it is a sinful waste, and I was surprised that douce, steady, thrifty Scotchmen should adopt such an insane method with so valuable a material.

The University of Otago has recently taken a new departure in a most sensible and practical direction, in sending travelling professors to lecture to the mining population on the chemistry and technology of rocks, ores, &c. They might well enlarge their field, and give lectures to farmers on chemistry of soils, rotation of crops, adaptations of mechanics to farming processes, and on other subjects of practical importance to farmers.

But of this more anon.

We left the peaceful manse of Warepa with many regrets, and passing through a bare pastoral and agricultural country, with little of interest in the scenery, reached Gore, the bustling little town where the Waimea cross-roads railway branches off through the fertile but bare Waimea plains, to join the Lakes line at Lumsden.

All the burns and streams in this part of the country are well stocked with trout, and in the season this is quite an angler's paradise. The Mataura River, a stream of some magnitude, traverses the Waimea plains, and runs past Gore. It is full of trout. The price of a fishing licence is twenty shillings for the season.

Gore, eighteen years ago, had not even a house to boast of. It was only a police camp, and a few canvas tents constituted the township. It is now the busy centre of a fine farming district. It has a great saw-mill, a flour-mill or two, and some capital stores, hotels, banks, and other buildings lining its well-laid-out streets.

It lies at the mouth of the wide Waimea Valley.

On both sides we see stretching away to the far horizon, like gleaming barriers of marble, tier on tier, terrace on terrace, peak on pinnacle, and pinnacle on peak, of the cold, glittering, alpine Cordilleras, every point being glorified by the slanting rays of a declining sun, glinting down from between bars of gold and amber and purple, until at length he sinks suddenly behind a Sierra, and the valley is rapidly enswathed in the sombre veil of a wintry night.

Intensely cold, and very hungry and weary, we bowl along through the darkness ; and at length, about ten o'clock, are rejoiced to see the red lights of the *Mountaineer* gleaming on the waters of Lake Wakatipu as she floats alongside the wooden wharf at Kingston.

CHAPTER XIV.

Up the dark silent lake—Dawn on Lake Wakatipu—"The Remarkables"—Queenstown—Chinamen gold-diggers—Lake scenery—Von River—Greenstone Valley—The Rees and Dart rivers—Head of the lake—Kitty Gregg—Peculiarities of the mountains—The terrace formation—The old Scotch engineer—Frankton Valley—Farmers' feathered foes—Lake Hayes—Arrive at Arrowtown.

It was a bitterly cold night, that on which we sailed up the silent lake, through the darkness, to Queenstown. The end at Kingston was formerly the outlet, but during some great glacial cataclysm the moraines must have filled the valley, and raised the level of the lake, the pent-up waters eventually finding a fresh egress much farther up; by the Kawarau Falls into the Kawarau Valley.

The lower end of the lake is not nearly so picturesque as the upper. Still it was eerie, in the extreme. This silent gliding up the unknown vista, with giant mountains snow-covered and silent on either hand, like wraiths and spectres, keeping watch and ward over the mysterious depths below. The churning swish of the paddles alone broke the deathly stillness. The cold was intense. But soon the fragrant odour of grilled steak stole on the frosty air, and all poetry was banished for a time, while we satisfied

our hunger from the choice cuisine of the *Mountaineer*

The *Mountaineer*, I should mention, is not the least wonder in this region of wonders. It is a perfect little craft, clean as an admiral's launch, comfortable as a first-class hotel, and one marvels to find a steamer of such elegance and pretensions so far away from salt water. Captain Wing, a son of the old harbour-master of Hobson's Bay, is a debonair and pleasant cicerone, and takes a kindly pleasure in showing the beauties of the lake to any passenger who betrays an interest in his surroundings.

This dark, cold, lonely progression up the lake, was, however, a fitting prelude to the marvellous panorama of beauty which broke upon our enraptured sight next morning.

My Scottish blood fired with rapture at the sight of that wondrous vision across the lake. At our feet the steely blue expanse rippled and gently undulated under the breath of morning. Beyond a mighty mountain range pierces the clouds, which have settled in dense fleecy folds upon the ragged peaks. The mist hangs midway between the upper heights, and the steely lake below. To the left a chain of sharp peaks extend, barred and ridgy, and flecked with wreaths of snow, which seems to have been driven and stamped into their black, rugged sides by the stormy winds which at times rave and howl with fury down the passes. These peaks are known as the far-famed Remarkables. And far away down the lake, vista after

vista opens up of the grim snowy sentinels, that looked down on us through the darkness of the night. In a few sheltered crevices, here and there cowers a scanty handful of stunted trees and shrubs, as if huddling for shelter from the biting blasts that with icy breath come hurtling and howling down the gorges from the fields of snow. What a scene of desolate grandeur! I had heard of the majesty of the mountains of Wakatipu; but the reality beggared all description. We are encompassed on every hand by these mighty masses, and could fancy them *djinn*s, guarding the valley of desolation from all contact with the outside world.

The horizon is crowded thick with hoary giants; and beyond their utmost pinnacles the scene is circumscribed by a band of black-blue leaden cloud; save where, behind us, closing in the valley at the back of Queenstown, a drapery of purest white has settled down on the mountains, with not a speck sullyng its absolute purity.

Down on the little wharf two stalwart lakesmen are discharging a cargo of firewood from a melancholy-looking ketch; and a blue-faced teamster is vigorously blowing on his chilled fingers. The whistle of the *Mountaineer* wakes the echoes, and hastily dressing, we sally forth from Mrs. Eichardt's cosy hotel and embark once more on the tidy little steamer whose hospitality we have already tested.

Going up the lake the most noteworthy peaks

passed in succession are these: Mount Cecil Walter Peak, the broad dome of Mount Nicholas, the Round Peak, Tooth Peak, and then the wondrous glory of the Humboldt ranges. On the right, or Queenstown side, the ranges start with White Point, then Mount Crichton, Mirror Peak, Stone Peak, and Mount Larkins; while at the top of the lake stand out prominently like very Sauls among the others, Mounts Alfred and Earnslaw, the latter 9200 feet high. There are a few patches of cultivation at intervals around the lake; but several of the sheep-runs have been abandoned owing to the ravages made by rabbits. Walter Peak station was sold the other day for a mere song; and Cameron's run was similarly sacrificed only a few months ago, the rabbits having regularly starved out the sheep. Phosphorized oats have been laid everywhere, and gangs of rabbitters are out all over the country; but much of it is so wild and inaccessible to all but the bunnies themselves that these virtually are masters of the situation.

My sharp ear catches the sing-song jabber of Chinamen forward. What can have lured the followers of Confucius to this inhospitable and out-of-the-way region? Verily, these celestials deserve the name they sometimes get, "The Scotchman of the East," for they are ubiquitous. Not that the canny Caledonian feels much flattered by the comparison. These men are gold-diggers, proceeding to the top of the lake. Lots of coarse gold is found hereabouts, mostly from surface sluicing,

but various reefs are also being profitably worked. During two months of the year the cold is so intense that work is stopped.

We are evidently destined to behold the lake in one of its sulky moods. The clouds are hovering ominously near the mountain tops. A mantle of thick mist is already creeping over the face of the crags, as if to hide their gruesome nakedness.

The name of the valley here has a grim suggestiveness. It is called Insolvent Valley. So called owing to two impecunious ones having managed to cross the lake, and elude their clamorous creditors by threading the passes on horseback, and getting safely away to Lumsden, and the outside world.

At Rat Point we turn the elbow of the lake, and get a glorious view far up its wondrous expanse. The three islands named respectively Tree, Pig, and Pigeon Islands, nestle on the water ahead; and beyond, the eye tries to pierce the obscurity of a wild glen, filled with curling volumes of mist, that lifting at intervals, show mighty pinnacles of rock, and fields of snow stretching into the mysterious distance in seemingly endless continuity.

We stop to land a passenger at the mouth of the Von River, which comes tearing down through the gorges, bringing with it tons upon tons of gravel and shingle, which in its shifting course, terraces the plain, and carries ruin and desolation in its path. During the last few years the stream has shifted its bed fully a mile, and in its migration it has cut away one of the finest orchards that was

in all the lake district. The scene now is one of unrelieved desolation.

At intervals, as the steamer progresses, a white gleam of silvery foam comes streaking down through the fern, and flashes over the rocks, marking the descent of some tumbling cascade from the melting snows on the heights. After heavy rains the hillsides are just one chaos of hissing, roaring, leaping water. Every gully becomes a gleaming torrent. Every rocky buttress is enveloped in seething, churning foam. The crash and roar of landslips is heard above the swishing boom of the cataracts, and the wild Walpurgis of the angry elements is held, as earth and lake and sky blend in one mad medley of convulsive sound and commingling strife.

Now we have the lake scenery in all its weird presentment. Words utterly fail to describe the savage grandeur of the hills above the Greenstone River, which here comes rolling its brown waters through a deep black cleft in the mountains. Gusts of crapy mist are creeping, snaky-like, up the gorge. The sides of the defile are wooded with a dark forest mass, in fit keeping with its surroundings. What a startling contrast to look upward from this funereal sombreness, and gaze on the immaculate majesty of the still, lone mountain crags, piercing their flaming crests through the grey canopy of cloud.

A surveyed track leads through the Greenstone Valley to Martin's Bay, on the West Coast, only some fifty or sixty miles distant. My good friend

the Scotch engineer, waxes enthusiastic, too, as I expatiate, with what eloquence I can command, on the glorious scenery around us.

"Aye, man, it's juist graund," he says; "it only wants some big gentleman's hoose, and beech nuts and hazel nuts, and a gamekeeper to chase ye, to be like hame."

Luckily there are no gamekeepers here, though to be sure there is a close season for the trout. One magnificent trout, weighing upward of 30 lbs., was caught in the lake recently, and we feasted on a boiled trout on board which had been dried and smoked by the cook, and was as big as a good-sized salmon. (The trout, of course, not the cook.)

We are now reaching the far end of the lake. The hillsides are here heavily wooded, and have a softer aspect than the terrible bare desolation which marks the rugged seams and iron ridgy bars of "The Remarkables." As we look back, too, the three islands form a pretty foreground, and the pitying mists drape the bare rocks, softening their rugged outlines, till the scene looks like a summer pass in the Trossachs. As ever and anon the veil is lifted, however, the great height of the towering mountains, here some 8000 to 9000 feet of sheer acclivity, burns in upon the brain. The snowy peaks rise abrupt, sheer, straight up, up, up, like a pyre of white flame. It looks as if earth were blazing up her very mountain tops in sublimated essence "as a wave-offering before the Lord." How can I describe the wondrous sight?

Take this mountain-side now, for instance. Let me try, however faintly and inadequately, to present it to you. It displays to the beholder an epitome of every varied feature of Alpine scenery; from the calm blue lake on which we float the eye seeks the skirting of wave-worn lichen rock. The mossy weather-worn boulders girdle the strand, draped in part by fern, and shadowed by the hill myrtle and manukau scrub; next the bracken-covered slopes, with their dull, dead greenery; the ridgy coping beyond, dipping yonder into a warm bosom, set thick with birch and boughy trees; above that again the silvery sparkle of a hill torrent with a sheen and glitter at every successive step, as the water leaps from ledge to ledge, lighting up the whole picture; all around and above, in swelling ridges and billowy bosses, the dun-brown stunted herbage spreads, with here and there a warty excrescence as the bed-rock bursts through the shrivelled, shrunken skin, and presents its nakedness, which the trailing mists hasten to cover. Now, as the eye ranges higher, the mists gather thicker. The clouds kiss the bare patches. The shroud and pall of vaporous film drapes the scarred face with its clinging cerements; and higher up, peeping through the ever-shifting upper strata of the trailing gauze, the gleaming peak itself robed in eternal snows, lifts up its silent witness to the heavens, a mute protest one might fancy against the smirched and sullied creation of the lower firmament.

Some idea of the great altitude of the mountains here is formed from the appearance of the forests round about Kinloch. From the deck of the steamer the trees seem mere shrubs; but as you approach the shore, you are astonished to find them great towering forest kings; and the trunks that seemed slender as a woman's wrist, are now seen to be huge logs, and the sawn planks are of a large size. Close by is an enormous water-wheel, which works the neighbouring saw-mill. This is said to be the largest mill-wheel in New Zealand—indeed, some enthusiastic Maorilanders say there is no bigger in existence. We watch the slow revolutions, the water plashing in glittering circles, and hear the clanging resonance of the saws eating through the great logs. The lake here is over 1200 feet deep, and dips down sheer from the bank. The overhanging hills are more than 8000 feet high.

Opposite the saw-mill, up a narrow gully called Buckler's Burn, a party of Chinamen are at work, and succeed in getting very fair quantities of coarse gold. Up the Rees Valley there is a battery at work on the quartz reef known as The Invincibles.

The head of the lake possesses enough objects of interest to detain the tourist for weeks. The great Lake Valley itself terminates in a long triangular flat, through which come tearing down the rapid waters of the Rees and Dart. The exploration of these valleys is rewarded by the discovery of waterfalls, cataracts, gorges of surpassing grandeur, glaciers of fascinating beauty,

and artistic peeps such as may be equalled in the Himalayas, but surely are nowhere surpassed on this planet of ours.

Beyond the flat rise snowy cones and isolated pinnacles, and the eye follows peak after peak, and snowfield after snowfield, till vision loses itself amid the blinding whiteness of Mount Earnslaw, uncontaminated as yet by the touch of human tread.

A Mr. Mason owns a very beautiful bit of fairy land here, adorned with beauteous vegetation, and which goes by the name of Paradise. It is not inaptly named. On the hither side a Mr. Haynes, an Irish storekeeper, has recently purchased a property; and, with Hibernian humour, has christened it Purgatory, because, as he says, "you must pass through Purgatory before you reach Paradise."

We have just been lucky enough to get a glimpse of Earnslaw's hoary crown. Now a wild blinding sleet comes down, and hides all the glorious panorama from our gaze; and, as the steam whistle screams hoarsely, as if in emulation of the shrieking storm, we seek "the seclusion that our cabin grants" to thaw our icy feet and fingers, and muse on the marvellous glory of crag and peak, and lake and fell that enwraps us all around.

At Kinloch, the tourist will find every comfort at Bryant's Hotel. At Glenorchy, on the other side, Mr. Birley has clean and comfortable quarters at your disposal, and is attentive to your every want.

At Bryant's, Kitty Gregg, the guide, was pointed out to us. She is renowned through all the lake country as a daring and accomplished horsewoman. Can handle an oar like a Beach, and an axe in a style that would make Gladstone envious. Bred and reared amid these rocky pastures and wild solitudes, she knows every foot of the country, and is as free, fearless, and independent as the winds that whistle round Mount Earnslaw. Woe betide the "rash intruding fool," who in his self-sufficiency would presume on Kitty's sex to give himself airs, or attempt any familiarity. We heard of one case where she left a coxcomb to find his way home by himself, and he getting lost in the mountains was glad humbly to sue for pardon, and accept Kitty's guidance into safety after she had thoroughly frightened him by a temporary desertion. Kitty is evidently a lake institution, and much respected by all the dwellers round about.

I am not sure but that the mountains at the top of the lake are not even in some respects more remarkable than "The Remarkables" themselves."

They all rise at the same angle from the valley. Their ridgy backs all point in the same direction, and each terminates in a cliffy point very similar in shape. Each is a counterpart of the other, and are all clad in the same livery of black spots and streaks and silver scales. I could not help the fancy being engendered that they were a school of gigantic dolphins suddenly frozen into ice, as by the fiat of some *dev* or *djinn*, as they were taking a ten-thousand-foot

plunge upward, from the still blue depths of the abyss. They look in their regularity of outline just like so many great fish, and I do not think the simile at all a strained one.

On the Glenorchy side are some very perfect examples of the terrace formation, which is one of the most extraordinary of the geological phenomena which abound on all hands. The top terrace is named the Bible. It has a breadth of eighty or ninety acres, and is as flat as a book, though why it gets the name I could not find out. There is no doubt that each terrace was successively the lake level, and as the waters sank, owing to the cutting away of the rim at the Kawarau Gorge, these steps of this giant's staircase were left in their present regularity. Now, of course, great gaps and chasms are being torn through them by the incoming waters, and another terrace is forming at the present level of the lake. The waters will again recede, and fresh terraces be formed, until in time a valley will be left with the conjoined waters of the Rees and Dart foaming through it, in a deep gorge, just as the Kawarau now tears down through its rocky channel.

The crowning feature of the whole view is, of course, Mount Earnslaw. He rises from the flat of two abrupt ridges, enclosing a vast glacier between. The ridges gradually draw together, and at the point of convergence a majestic mass shoots up into the heavens, like a pyramid of glory, and the great, glistening, white expanse is Mount Earnslaw.

The mighty battlements round the lake, with their piebald ridges, and black spots, look like the grim walls of some old Afghan hill fort, riddled with bullets, and torn and rent by fierce onslaughts of the foe.

Close to Pigeon Island there is a very pretty pass between the island end and the main land. The cabbage-trees, green sward, and verdant bush (for there are no rabbits on this island, and grass and sheep are consequently abundant) are charming by contrast with the bare desolation of the snowy ridges. The passage close to the three islands is the prettiest peep on the whole lake. It is pretty. The rest is grand.

The keen mountain air had whetted my appetite, and we were glad to hear the summons of the bell to lunch. We found the cuisine most excellent on board the *Mountaineer*, and some lake trout, smoked *à la Findon* haddock, a second time tempted me to make rather a display of my gastronomic powers. Old Thomas Thompson, the Scotch engineer, I noticed eyeing me rather dubiously, and I fancied he was putting some constraint on his appetite. I afterwards found he had some reason to doubt the too facile pen of the peripatetic scribe, inasmuch as his appetite for porridge had already been made the butt of "The Vagabond's"¹ sacrilegious sarcasm. It seems that on the occasion of "The Vagabond's"¹ visit, poor Thompson had made the porridge disappear with

¹ "The Vagabond," Mr. Julian Thomas, a well-known writer and special commissioner for the *Melbourne Argus*.

a celerity which must have roused Mr. Thomas' envy. At all events the allusion he made to "the porridge-eating engineer" in his letters to the *Argus*, was taken hold of by the small wits of the place, and henceforth poor Thompson's life was made a burden to him by constant allusions to the satisfying dish so dear to Scotchmen.

In a burst of confidence, judging from my tongue that I would sympathize with him as a brother Scot, and having already seen that my own appetite was none of the least robust, "Man," he said, with some bitterness, "Yon was an' awfu' chiel, yon Vagabone! The beggar eevidently couldna enjoy the parritch himsel, so he needna been sae like a dowg i' the manger wi' his remarks aboot me. Ma fegs," he continued, "I'm thinkin' Athol Brose wad hae been mair i' the Vagabone's way than guid plain parritch. Feth! he looket mair like a batter't gill stoup than an honest parritch cogie ony w'y."

This deliverance of the engineer being a criticism upon his critic, I promised to record, greatly to the good old fellow's delight.

We spent a delightful time in Queenstown. Mrs. Eichardt's hotel is most comfortable. She looks well after every department herself, the result being that everything works smoothly. The trout cutlets and Scotch baps were joys for memory to linger lovingly upon. One trout was recently stranded here which weighed 40 lbs. Surely the boss trout of the world.

. We walked up to Mr. Murray's fruit-garden, and

got some very rosy apples from the hospitable old Highlander ; and his couthie auld wifie regaled us with delicious butter and other home-made luxuries.

It was, indeed, with genuine regret we turned our backs on this region of romantic beauty and wild grandeur.

On the way to Frankton we passed flocks of starlings, flights of parrakeets, and hordes of sparrows and green linnets, all destructive pests and enemies that cause the poor patient farmers immoderate loss. At Boye's station, at the Kawarau Falls, an army of rabbitters are employed, and at the tariff of 3*d.* per skin many of them make over 12*s.* per diem of wages.

The poisoned grain which is laid for the rabbits has destroyed nearly all the quail and wild duck, of which there used to be legions about here. Away up at the head of the lake, on the Rees and Dart, paradise ducks are yet pretty numerous.

The Frankton Valley is backed up by the glistening Crown Ranges—one immense expanse of unsullied snow, rolling along to the verge of the horizon in billowy waves of dazzling purity and gleaming splendour. The fields are here protected by rabbit-proof wire fences ; but times have been hard with the farmers, and we see hundreds of acres of uncut crops beaten down by the untimely snow, and myriads of stooks rotting in the sodden fields. The land here is very productive ; a hundred bushels of oats to the acre is quite a common yield.

Crossing the brawling and treacherous Shot-over, in its deep gravelly valley, we top the rise on the farther side, and immediately our eyes are gladdened by the sight of Lake Hayes, lying in its pacific beauty before us. The surroundings of stubble and numerous farmsteads give a homely air to the view ; but the majesty of the snowy ramparts which stretch round about like an amphitheatre of Parian marble, brightens up the lake with an effect which is most theatrical in its startling contrasts. The lake is so crowded with trout that, as an Irishman would say, " they jostle ache other ; " and in the raupo selvage at the lower end, swamp hens and ducks are at times pretty abundant.

As night is falling, and the mists are creeping down the valleys, we enter Arrowtown, with its three churches and quaint old slate-built houses, and are glad that Host O'Kane has built a good fire and provided a cosy dinner for us, both of which we mightily enjoy.

CHAPTER XV.

Arrowtown—"A river of golden sands"—An auriferous region—A dismal look-out—Old gold-workings—A terrible chasm—Nature's laboratory—Rabbitters at work—A serious plague—The kea, or liver-eating macaw—Hawk and pigeon—"Roaring Meg"—Cromwell township—The Molyneux Valley—Deserted diggings—Halt at Roxburgh.

SURELY there are few towns on this earth's surface more hemmed in by mountains than Arrowtown. The snowy peaks peer down the chimneys, and in whatever direction you look out your eye meets only crags and rocks, gorges and precipices. The Arrow runs its muddy stream at the base of the cliffs, and the houses, built of flat slate-stones, jostle each other on the brink of the stream. The sands in the river have been turned over for gold some five times already; and it is said that a methodical search would even now unearth much more treasure.

It was raining heavily as we left O'Kane's little hostelry, where every regard had been paid to our comfort; and never in all my travelling experience did I face a gloomier prospect. We seemed hopelessly caged in by immense lofty walls of rock; and the bridle and team tracks to the various workings, in the glens and gorges, wound along the

face of the walls at a dizzy height above the stream ; with bare gaunt pinnacles piercing the mists in all directions.

The township was founded during the first gold rush to the district, twenty-six years ago. The rude masonry walls of the old houses are much more antique-looking than one commonly sees in any colonial town.

All this region round about is auriferous. The shaly, slaty, crumbling mass, of which the hills and strata are composed, is seamed and permeated everywhere throughout its bulk by thin veins of quartz, and most of these are gold-bearing. In all the flats, and in the beds and on the sides of all the rivers and creeks, surface digging and sluicing has been more or less profitably followed ; and at one time there was an immense mining population in these lake districts. Now, however, "Ichabod" might almost be written over the map.

At Macetown there are some rich reefs now being worked, and Macetown is even more inaccessible than Arrowtown. The teams that go to Macetown must surely possess some of the attributes of the goat or house-fly, for the road is perhaps one of the most audacious in the colonies. It literally sticks to the face of the cliffs in some parts.

Rain ! rain. How it patters. Mud ! mud. How it splashes. The horses, poor things, look veritable hypochondriacs, and both driver and passengers look blue as the surroundings.

Through a temporary rift in the grey mist, the gaunt hills show their bare, naked, ugly backs, lacerated with gaping scars. All the glamour of the kindly drapery of snow has vanished under the pitiless pelting of the rain. Great landslips have laid bare the blue shale-beds on the mountain sides. The chasms and abyssmal depths look the very acme of wild unrelieved desolation. There is not a bright tint. The only signs of motion are the foaming cascades tearing down the gullies, their silvery streaks looking like the white locks of angry furies trailing over the barren jagged clefts. The only sign of life is where a ghostly gull, sated with the flesh of some poisoned rabbits, wings his heavy flight athwart the black-blue background of dripping rock.

We seem to be floating above the clouds, and to be dipping into a sea of mist. Yonder is a glorious peep! A rift in the cloud with a spumy circle of cirrus edges, reveals a glimpse of a snowy peak, far, far aloft. It looks, as we might fancy, the face of a veteran warrior, with a few lyart locks scattered thinly over his brow, to gaze at us through the gauzy curtains of an hospital window.

Now we cross the Arrow, swift as its name portends; roaring and foaming deep down in its drumly channel. Look at the old workings! What Titan's toil has been here! It looks as if a pack of prediluvian monsters had been madly tearing at the banks. The valley is riven and torn and trenched and furrowed in all directions. Every furlong of the way now for the next thirty

miles is like this. These are the early diggings. The auriferous earth was sluiced, and the boulders and rocks and pebbles piled up in great dykes and battlements out of reach of the water. It is a most unique appearance. I have never witnessed such. The dykes and wavy irregular outlines are quite unlike the débris and tumuli left after the workings or alluvial gold-washing in any part of Australia I have visited. Look back! How majestic seem these mighty sentinels, clad in eternal snow, and looking down so purely and serenely on the disrupted valley, as if in pity at the mad hurry-scurry and feverish lust of gold which they have witnessed.

The peaceful plough has now succeeded the eager pick and shovel, and several thatched farm-cots are visible here and there through the mists.

On our left a magnificent cascade comes shooting down over an abrupt ledge, and now we reach the Swift Burn gorge. 'Twould take a Doré to paint this awful chasm. Far below, the Swift Burn dashes. Appropriate name! The abyss is appalling in its inky hues of desolation. It looks as if mortification had set in on all the livid faces of crag, and rotting cliff, and the black-blue tinge of universal dissolution has set its seal on all the surroundings. The Arrow here loses its mud-begrimed waters in the olive-green volume of the swift Kawarau. The canyon is of a depth that makes one shudder. The crags and peaks are blasted as if by the scorching breath of the legions

of Apollyon. The seamed and riven sides of the crumbling gorge assume the most ghastly hues. All the potent agencies of nature in her most wrathful mood, have seemingly been exerted here to produce a chaos of wild, weird desolation. It is a picture fit for a prophet's vision, laden with wrath and woe, and desolation.

It is, indeed, a vision of judgment. The memory of it haunts me yet. A solemn awe settles on our spirits. Words utterly fail to present a tithe of the terrific awesomeness of this amazing pass.

We cross the Kawarau by a massive iron bridge, slung on thick wire cables, let into the solid rock on either side. A column of splintered spray comes scatteringly down over the giddy height to the left. We shudder as we gaze back at the terrible view.

Surely, now we are coming into some more cheerful environment? But no! Nature presents herself in these wild solitudes in her most forbidding guise. The Hindoos would say that Kali, or Doorga, the goddess of wrath and desolation, was the presiding divinity here. Everything is baneful—malign.

See dangling on yonder line a row of gory mangled scalps—a ribbon of bloody flesh with a silver selvage? What is it? Nay, start not! These are only a few hundred gory rabbit-skins drying for market. They are quite in keeping with the scenery.

A few farmsteads are scattered over this desolate

strath. On the other side of the river the strath is ribbed into ridges by the file-like teeth of innumerable rills and runlets. These are nature's files eating away the mass of the earthquake's upheaval. The swift Kawareau there is but nature's bosom, sweeping the detritus of the workshop down into the open plains of the low country, there to be worked up by the rosy fingers of that cunning artificer old Helios into ruddy fruit and golden grain, and all the witching loveliness of grass and flower and tree.

What a laboratory is this! We are looking here at nature in her apprentice stage.

The mist is now gathering its serried battalions and slowly retiring to the mountain tops. The valleys come out more distinctly. The sound of falling waters becomes more clear and musical.

Hurrah! Yonder is the sun, and we are to have a fine day after all.

What a glorious vision have we here! Surely, reader, could you but behold this with me my rhapsodies might be pardoned.

This gorge is named Nevis Bluff Pass. How eerie and uncanny look those rotten crumbling masses overhead. The road winds in and out amid heaps of fallen débris, and the rocks hang ominously over the horses' heads. Below, the impetuous river is in a more savage mood than ever. The water, pent up and impeded by fallen rocks, roars and swishes and churns itself into foam, as it dashes in impotent wrath against the great buttresses and barriers that seek to retard its

furious rush. There is not a blink of brightness here to relieve the pallid leaden look. Even the snowy heights are again hidden by the grey dark envious mist, which clings to the sodden soil like grave-cloths.

Here is an episode in keeping with the general aspect. The rabbitters have been out laying poisoned grain. Poor greedy bunny! Have you no premonition of danger? No; the all-devouring greed which makes these multitudinous hordes such an awful plague, is not to be deterred by any scruples. The grain is looked on as a god-send, for of grass and green herbage there is not a blade—all eaten up long ago. The vermin are at starvation point. They eat. See now! Look at that one leaping in the air in its death agonies. Look at the contortions and gyrations of that other. Hear the agonizing screams of a third; the deadly drug is eating at the vitals of the hapless rodents. The earth is dotted with white upturned pelts of dozens of them. They lie thick behind every tuft of spear-grass, in scores under every cliff, in hundreds over the plains. The peltry hunters will have a rich harvest this evening. As the rabbitters move forward, picking up the dead beasts and rapidly skinning them, hundreds of sea-gulls follow the gang, flitting about like eerie ghosts, and gorging themselves on the poisoned carcasses. The poison does not seem to affect these birds; at least no dead gulls are ever noticed, though I saw them myself feeding on the poisoned flesh.

This rabbit infliction is of awful dimensions here. We saw them by the thousand, bobbing about among the dry withered thistle-stalks, and many hundreds of tons of skins are exported from Otago and Southland every year. On some runs as many as fifty men are employed laying poison and collecting skins. The skins almost pay for the outlay, but of course the check to the wool industry cannot be formulated in figures. The skins are most valuable naturally when the winter fur is on them. There is so much difficult country hereabouts where the vermin can breed in safety, that they will never now be wholly eradicated, but already they are being sensibly held in check, and meantime the poor people comfort themselves with the thought, that after all, employment is given to many hundreds of hands, and money is of necessity spent in the country which might otherwise only swell the hoards of absentee squatters, and rich corporations. The poison used is phosphorized grain. For flat country, where the warrens are easily accessible, and the soil not too porous, probably no better means of checking the plague has been found than that promulgated by an old fellow-student of my own, whom I had the pleasure of meeting again in Dunedin after a long separation of more than twenty years.

I refer to Professor James G. Black, Professor of Chemistry in the Otago University. Some nine years ago the rabbit plague was working havoc with the prospects of pastoralists in Southland; and one of the leading squatters, Mr. James

Holmes, of Castle Rock station, Southland, wrote to Professor Black, almost in despair, to see if he could suggest any remedy. After some consideration the professor recommended the trial of the bisulphide of carbon and himself superintended the experiments. The rabbits were first of all hunted into the warrens by dogs. A rag or stem of the common New Zealand flax (phormium), dipped in the bisulphide, or a spoonful of the liquid itself, was then put into each hole in the warren and a sod was then stamped into each opening. The poisonous fumes are immediately generated and penetrate to the remotest recesses of the warren, and no live rabbit escapes the deadly dose.

For low lands this is the best remedy that was then known, and none better has been discovered since, and to Professor Black belongs the honour of having first suggested and tried it. It gives me genuine pleasure to be able to record this of an old fellow-student ; for his modesty is only equalled by his high attainments.

During this digression the coach has been jolting on, and the weather has been clearing.

Right ahead, seemingly barring the valley, Mount Difficulty towers aloft. It is well named. Its black bare ribs are like the bones of some giant megatherium, which have been scorched and blackened by primeval fires. We cross the Victoria Bridge, and in the valley below, the Nevis here joins its waters to those of the Kawarau. The Nevis is muddy and thick as pea-soup from recent freshets.

In these wild glens the liver-loving kea is very plentiful. This epicure is rather an interesting example of an uncommon fact in natural history. Of course it is pretty generally known that the kea has attained an unenviable notoriety on account of the damage he does to the sheep. He fastens on to some unlucky beast, and with his powerful hooked beak regularly cuts a hole into the poor victim till he reaches the dainty he is in search of—the liver. This luscious morsel having been appropriated, the bleeding, lacerated victim is left to die in agony, while the rapacious kea transfers his attentions to another ill-fated member of the flock. And yet the kea was formerly a fruit-eating bird. He is allied to the macaw family, and how the taste for a carnivorous diet became developed does not seem yet to be known. It is a curious instance of change of natural instinct.

I should say the student of natural history would find a fine field for observation here. Another episode befell us here, and thus: The driver and I were chatting gaily, when an exclamation from him roused my attention to the swift movements of a couple of birds. A sparrowhawk in pursuit of a fine blue rock pigeon. They swept past us on fleet, strong wing. The hawk swooped to strike; but the pigeon eluded him. Again they circled, swept upward, downward, flashed past us like a streak of light, and again the hawk made his deadly dart. Palpitating, trembling, the harried pigeon just managed to

swoop under the friendly shelter of a clump of bushes beside a mountain rill that came merrily rippling down the hillside. The baffled hawk, with a most malignant glitter in his eye, took up his station on a jutting rock, and had evidently made up his mind to wait for the poor pigeon.

"No, old man, I'll be hanged if you'll have him," said Jack, the driver, apostrophizing the hawk.

"Here, sir, hold the ribbons." This to me, throwing me the reins. Jack got down from his perch, and after a little search in the bush was rewarded by the capture of the poor dazed pigeon, who was consigned to safe custody in the boot. The hawk dodged a stone, which Jack threw at him, and very sulkily winged his way off in quest of other prey.

At this part of the road the rocks show a curious honeycombed appearance, and the river rolls along in a series of rapids, in a terrific chasm far below. This spot is known locally as "the natural bridge." A mass of fallen rock obstructs the stream, which at low water can be easily forded here over the o'er-arching rocks. High up in mid air, a broken and partly dismantled iron flume spans the gorge. It was designed to carry water across to some diggings on the other side of the valley; but the span was too great, and it was never a success.

Now the road crosses "Roaring Meg." The name describes the torrent. It comes roaring, tearing, crashing, dashing down the steep, and plunges like a catapult into the river bed. The

force and velocity must be stupendous, and the impact of so many tons of water at such a speed sends the volume of the Kawarau high in air, tossed in blinding spray, and the mighty buttresses of rock seem to tremble again as the water surges to and fro in their cavernous recesses. The swift Kawarau staggers, and its waves, swift as they are, are for the moment dammed back, and rise as a charger preparing for a bound into the thick of the fray. The point of junction is a hissing hell of foam—a very Phlegethon of fury. It needs the pen of a master to fitly describe such a “meeting of the waters” as this.

Below this point, and across the foam-filled chasm, we see the miners' huts on the Gentle Annie claim. Provisions and stores are sent across in a chair slung to a wire rope stretched 'across the river. By the same dizzy contrivance the wives and children of the district cross and re-cross. The school children use this contrivance daily. Surely here, if anywhere, we should have a race of women not liable to that mysterious malady known as “the nerves.”

Still farther down the valley, great beetling rocks rise on either hand, and amid their honey-combed recesses colonies of blue and white pigeons have taken up their quarters. Here we release our rescued captive, and watch his gladsome exultant flight, as he rejoiced in his recovered freedom.

There is a magnificent cataract in the river here for some hundred yards. Several Chinamen are fossicking among the chinks and crannies of

the colossal dykes which the early toilers for gold have formerly heaped up. Millions upon millions of tons of earth must have been sluiced from these hillsides.

We pass now a gang of men busily restoring the traffic which has been interrupted by a terrific landslip caused by the recent heavy rains. The rocks here are rotten and treacherous. The formation is chiefly mica schist, both hard and soft, with beds and layers of slate and phyllite.

A short distance beyond, we reach the deserted Kawarau Gorge township. There was formerly a dense and busy population here ; but there are only some three houses and a school now standing.

The valley now widens out, and away across the river, Jack points out the cliffs of Bannockburn, where active sluicing is even now being carried on, and where some very heavy finds of gold have made the place famous. Like mostly all the fields around this district, however, Bannockburn is now getting worked out, and will soon be deserted.

Now we rattle on to a broad, flat, sandy plain, a church steeple showing its tip at the far verge ; above which towers a snowy range, and nestling in the shadow thereof is the neat little town of Cromwell.

Cromwell, in common with mostly every town of any importance in New Zealand, can boast of one thing which Sydney with all her magnificence yet lacks.

“ And what is that ? ” you may ask.

Well, it is simply this : a perfect and plentiful water supply. Its source is in the hills over the river, and the water crosses in great pipes under the bridge. There are three banks represented in the town, and a racecourse and hospital testify both to the philanthropic and sporting tendencies of the people.

From a lignite pit a few miles out on the plain, good fuel can be procured at 20s. per ton. This rather unusual conjunction of coal and gold is common enough on the Otago goldfields.

At Cromwell the individuality of the Kawarau becomes merged in that of the Molyneux, and the valley downward is now named the Molyneux Valley ; emblematic this of the gradual absorption of the native in the foreign element. In a hollow by the river, we find the Chinese camp. Of course a gardener is to be found in close proximity, and the rocking of several mining cradles, shows that these industrious and persevering Asiatics are yet finding payable gold, though the more impatient Anglo-Saxon has long since considered the workings "played out."

The contrast between the green current of the Molyneux and the grey muddy volume of the Kawarau is most striking. All around the junction of the two streams the country consists of bare grey rugged cliffs and tumbled rocks of a friable material, which crumbles and flakes under the influence of the weather ; and the river carries enormous masses of material with it in its onward course.

In fact, New Zealand is a good instance of growth—not merely mental, or political, or commercial, but physical material growth. Geologists tell us that every year the land encroaches on the sea ; and when we see the rivers at work we can see the process for ourselves.

The valley of the Molyneux is much wider and more open ; but at this wintry season (May) it is not less bare and desolate-looking than the upper straths and gorges.

Clyde is another languishing little town through which we pass. The new bridge on stone piers is a noticeable feature. The old one, with four others on the river, were swept away entirely by the great flood of 1878.

At Alexandria, the next township, we find sluicing on a small scale still being practised. A substantial dredge is at work in the river bed itself, and the mud-laden Manuherikia rolls down its tribute to swell the swift Molyneux.

The country here presents a picture of chaotic desolation. The rocks are crumbling and rotting. Everything looks ruinous. Sand and withered ~~the~~ stalks seem the prevailing products of the place, and there does not seem even enough herbage to support a rabbit. In fact, we see numbers of dead ones near the road, and the great convoys of gulls are the only live animals we see.

It is a treat from this desolate region to come upon a well-cultivated, well-populated settlement known as Spear Grass Flat. It is also called Bald

Hill Flat, but as Bald Hill is covered with great brown bunches of spear-grass, all but a spot on the crown, the origin of the names is not far to seek. On the right the Old Man Range lies, gleaming white with drifted snow. Round one farmstead we count over thirty great stacks. The wheat grown here took the second prize at the Sydney Exhibition.

Here another curious freak of bird nature came under our observation. A massive carcase had been slung up by the butcher of the settlement, and perched on it were dozens of twittering sparrows and tom-tits tearing away at the flesh and regaling themselves right royally. I had often heard the expression, "A tom-tit on a round of beef," as an illustration of an unequal match in size, but here was the real thing itself.

At Gorge Creek we dip into the valley down a slippery, muddy decline, very trying to the poor horses, and change teams at the top of the next rise. The last sixteen miles into Roxburgh is through rocky country and is done in the dark. At Coal Creek Flat there are some famous orchards. The fruit fetches high prices in Dunedin. Grapes are grown under glass, and it is amazing to see so little attention paid to such an industry, since more than three-fourths of the fruit consumed in the colony comes from abroad.

Flitting lights, twinkling and moving down below near the stream, and others shining with a steady glow, now apprise us that Roxburgh is in sight. The lights by the river are those of the

night shift of miners, busy sluicing their wash-dirt while the river is low. Roxburgh is our resting-place for the night, and cold and weary we alight, and are glad of the welcome dinner and warm fire which are awaiting us.

CHAPTER XVI.

Dunkeld—Our Jehu—On the box seat—A Chinese Boniface—Gabriel's Gully—Good farming—Dunedin—Harbour works—A category of "the biggest things on record"—Charms of Dunedin—A holiday drive—The Grand Hotel—The churches—Preachers—Dunedin mud—Beer—Keen business competition—The West Coast connection—"Wild Cat" claims—The Scotch element—Litigiousness—Energy of the people.

ROXBURGH, like nearly all the other goldfields towns in New Zealand, is now but a shadow of its former self. There is not much of interest to note about it.

To Dunkeld, we ride through a wide pastoral valley studded with numerous farms, and pass the deserted sites of old gold-crushings by the river. One or two dredges are still at work in the stream; but the gold got now is insignificant in comparison with the returns of the pristine rushes, when the valley was a busy humming human hive. Old James M'Intosh, our Jehu, one of the oldest drivers in New Zealand, is full of reminiscences of these stirring times. He points out to us the fine freehold estate of Mr. Joseph Clarke, brother of Sir William Clarke, of Victoria. Many farms about here are let at a high rental. I was told they

did not pay. We pass frequent parties of rabbit-ers, and almost every man we meet carries a gun, and is followed by several dogs. The rabbit question is a burning one hereabouts. We are getting out of the country of rocks now, and the hills become more rounded, and are clad with a denser growth. The scenery is more distinctly pastoral and rural. Flax swamps increase, and we leave the snows and cataracts behind us.

Dunkeld is a sleepy-looking little hamlet. Its great four-square hotel is big enough for a population of ten times the number the town can muster. The curtainless windows look cheerless.

The coach is packed inside, and I share the box seat with a dandy, diminutive publican, who has made a snug little pile as a butcher, and has taken to the tap in his old age as a sort of genteel occupation for his declining years. The little man is possessed of a fine vein of humour, of the broad American kind, and some of his passing remarks on men and things are shrewd and witty withal. The other occupant of the box seat is a desperately drunken Irishman, who alternately wants to fight and embrace the ex-butcher. At the slightest remark he flares up in the most ferocious manner, evidently looking on me as a base and bloody Saxon, whose head he would like to punch. His muttered treason occasionally bursts out into a general commination, which includes everything English, from Gladstone down to the meanest powder-monkey of her Majesty's fleet. It is in vain we reason, expostulate, threaten, cajole. His

rum-laden brain is proof against all our blandishments, until, mindful that "music hath charms," I try the effect of a plaintive Irish song on "the savage breast." And lo! at the old familiar strain the flood-gates are unloosed, and the poor, blundering, impulsive, drink-besotted, warm-hearted bosthoo begins to blubber like a child.

Poor Pat! Surely his love of country covers a multitude of sins. We get on better after this; but I have to sing till I am hoarse to keep our Hibernian friend in the right key, and possibly to preserve my pate from a punching.

We cross the river at Dunkeld on a pontoon raft, propelled by the power of the current through the agency of a traveller on a wire cable, such as we had seen on the Manawatu River. I was informed by M'Intosh that the idea had been borrowed from India, and introduced into New Zealand by an engineer who had served in the East.

At Lawrence, the ancient Tuapeka (why will they change these beautiful old native names for the vulgar patronymics of Cockaigne?), we bid good-bye once more to the stage coach, and revert to the iron horse. Here for the first time in all my colonial experience, I noticed a Chinese name over a hotel. Sam Chew Lain is the Boniface of "The Chinese Empire Hotel," nor is this the only sign of the march of civilization among the Mongolians in New Zealand, as I found on reading the Bankruptcy list in Dunedin the names of two Chinese market-gardeners, whose liabilities were set

down in round figures at some 600*l.*, and their assets a modest ten-pound note.

"Tarantara!!"

As the urbane celestial blandly observes.

"Bankee lupchee, welly goodee. Got him cash, got him goods. All same Englisman. Go tloo courtee!!"—

Close by is the famous Gabriel's Gully, which was about the first goldfield in Otago. What a scene was this in those rude lawless times. Every one conversant with the literature of the early gold days, can imagine the roar and turmoil, the ever-shifting phantasmagoria on those slopes; and along these flats, crowded with tents, blazing with camp fires, and the air resounding with the din of tongue and shovel and cradle, and not unfrequently the sharp report of firearms. Now the little settlement is peaceful enough. There is still one rich working up the creek, called the Blue Spur claim, which gives employment to about one hundred men. The houses are scattered over knolls, and up secluded gullies, and many pretty villas surrounded with ornamental gardens crown the ridges. There is a pretty quiet cemetery surrounded by pines on the hill behind the town where the coffin of many a wild and turbulent spirit moulders. At present the trees are for the most part leafless, and the aspect of the country is dun brown, and bare; but in summer this must be really a pretty district.

We pass Waitahuna, a great flat, where companies of bestial-looking Chinamen are fossicking

among the old workings. They have to go deep now for wash dirt, but get coarse gold, very red and water-worn, among the pebbles and drift. They are a more hang-dog set of oblique-looking pagans than one generally sees in New South Wales. Many of them look as if they had been in the wars.

Cultivation extends to the very tops of the ridges here. Great armies of gulls follow the shining ploughshare as it turns up the teeming tilth. And I am glad to observe pleasing evidences round every homestead that the tree-planting fever has been pretty generally infectious.

It does one's heart good, after the slovenly farming and tree-stumps of some parts of Australia, to see the clean fields here. The ploughmen of this part of Otago are famous, and the mathematical exactitude of the long, clean furrows would rejoice the heart of a true farmer anywhere. The train is full of volunteers going up to Dunedin for the review and sham-fight on the Queen's Birthday, and the run from Milton Junction is past Lake Waihoa, Mossgiel, &c., a part of the country which I have already described.

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Having now got back to the Otago capital, we find time to look about us, and very soon the conviction is forced upon us that, from an architectural point of view, Dunedin is the finest city of the whole colony. The inequalities of her surface lines undoubtedly aid in producing a fine effect; but the genius of her architects, the taste and

public spirit of her citizens, and the liberality of her merchants and magnates have all combined to adorn their hilly site, and the result is a noble city worthy of metropolitan rank in any country. Considering the age of the colony, I think the progress of this city nothing short of marvellous. Hitherto ocean steamers and big ships have had to discharge cargoes at Port Chalmers, a small town, prettily climbing over its rocky peninsula at the foot of the long firth or estuary, which extends upwards to Dunedin proper, some eight miles.

The Dunedinites, however, have never been satisfied with this arrangement. Year by year dredging, embanking, and other reclaiming operations have been going on. Steadily the channel has been deepening, and the reclaimed flats on either side broadening; and bigger and bigger craft have been, as time passes, able to come right up the bay to the city itself. The harbour board has expended vast sums of money on these works, and in anticipation of the time when the leviathans of the merchant service shall haul alongside, great wharves have been erected, mighty storehouses line the wharves, and the reticulations of the railway system interpenetrate both wharves and storehouses. Everything is ready for the big steamers, and now a monster dredge, said to be the largest on this round sphere of ours, is busily engaged deepening the channel still further; and no doubt the time is not far distant when the honourable ambition of Dunedin will be realized, and she will become a port of

direct call for the mightiest ocean-going vessels of the age.

En parenthèse, let us just for a moment recapitulate and array together these "biggest in the world" items, of which New Zealand is so proud. It is, indeed, a motley catalogue. First, the biggest dredge; then, the biggest water-wheel; next, the biggest trout; the biggest wooden building; the highest wooden bridge; the biggest calcareous terraces; the biggest bird (if the moa still lives); the biggest apples—those of the Waikato district; the biggest and most luxurious natural warm baths; the biggest terraced formation; the biggest glacier (that of Mount Cook—though that is doubtful); the biggest tattooing on the biggest reclaimed cannibal, with probably the biggest mouth; the biggest flax-bushes; the steepest railway incline; the biggest beds of shingle; the biggest concrete breakwater; the biggest cabbages—if we accept the cabbage-tree as generic; the biggest proportion of rabbits to the acre; the biggest artesian water supply (that of Christchurch); the biggest beds of watercress; the biggest colonial debt; and as its admirers say, the biggest hearted people, to which my own experience says amen; and the biggest future of any of Britain's colonies, to which with a Scotchman's proverbial caution, I say, "Weel, we'll see!" "*Nous verrons.*"

One of the charms of Dunedin is its irregularity of outline. The streets are nowhere straight. To get even an approximate idea of the city as a

whole, you must mount the fine tower of the yet incomplete town hall, or ascend the steep inclines which overlook the city, by one of the wire tramways, which are a feature of the locomotive life of Dunedin, or, if you are favoured with a fine day, take a drive along the beautiful winding road, which threads the heights of the peninsula, between the firth and the open sea, and you will be rewarded with views of the great city, which give you an idea of its extent and importance, such as perhaps you could acquire in no other way.

This drive formed a memorable event in our visit. I took with me a small select party of ladies and children, and we enjoyed the varied scenery to our hearts' content. On the one side the cultivated slopes leading down to the bay, on the other the frowning headlands, seagirt cliffs, and here and there a placid inlet, although in some places old ocean battled with the coast in its usual boisterous and hollow-sounding fashion. Some of the surf bits were exquisite in their beauty. Descending the hill above Portobello, however, the hired horse, which had hitherto been a paragon of every equine virtue, began to lash out wildly with his hind legs, and smashed the splinter bar. This finished my pleasure for the day. The horse required all my attention now, as he had become nervous, and manifested an insane desire to shy at every conceivable object we encountered. I had eight miles to drive home, along the winding shores of the bay, by the low road. There was no parapet, and the water lapped on the "bund"

or embankment all the way. My ladies were nervous ; my horse was likewise. My road was barely wide enough for two vehicles to pass, and the frail rope with which I had spliced my splintered splinter bar threatened to give at every tug. Under such circumstances I must be excused if I failed to see the vaunted beauty of Dunedin from the harbour. My wife says it was exquisite, beautiful, lovely, &c. As a dutiful husband, I endorse the dictum of my wife.

Dunedin from the harbour *is* beautiful.

One noteworthy feature of Dunedin, one grand feature, I may say, is its Grand Hotel. This is unique in the Southern hemisphere, and would not disgrace New York. Under Mr. Watson's able management the visitor finds himself relieved from every care. The dining-room and public drawing-rooms are palatial apartments. The private sitting-rooms are models of elegance and comfort. The bedrooms are without a fault, and the bath-rooms are luxurious to a degree. The table would satisfy the most fastidious ; and if you want a more obliging hall-porter than "long Charley," with his cadaverous eyes, well, you must be hard to please—that's all.

While I am in the praising mood, I must not omit to mention Burton Brothers for photographs of New Zealand scenery. If Bourne and Shepherd be a household word in India for collections of photography, surely Burton's is equally famous in New Zealand, and deservedly so. A visit to their atelier embraces all New Zealand. You

can study every phase of her marvellous coast, every aspect of her wonderful hills, rivers, and sounds.

If you want your portrait taken, you cannot find a better artist in that line than Morris. One glance at his handiwork will confirm what I say.

The churches are really fine. The Scotch Presbyterian Church, of Otago, is well endowed, and, much to its honour, it is a liberal patron of education, and supports two professorships in the University. But the First Church and Knox Church would be an ornament to any city ; and to see the dense throngs of big-headed, intelligent men, and fresh complexioned, elegantly dressed women, that crowd the churches is a treat. In Dunedin, *par excellence*, they "do not forget the assembling of themselves together as the manner of some is." Except in Mr. Charles Strong's church, or when Bishop Moorhouse preaches in Melbourne, I have not, in all the colonies, seen such packed congregations as in Dunedin.

To hear dear old Dr. Stuart preach was in itself worth a pilgrimage. The homely Scottish tongue, the genial mobile face, with the earnest eyes and appealing, winning smile, the quaint illustrations, and powerful searching home thrusts, were those of a born preacher. Would we had more such. I heard Dr. Roseby too. The affectionateness of the man would open the most closely guarded soul, and let the sweet influences of the Gospel work their will.

After what I heard and saw in Dunedin, my heart was uplifted. Let no one tell me that the power of the pulpit is on the wane. The Word is "quick and powerful" still as ever it was, where properly presented. But oh, woe is me for the many that "sit at ease in Zion." Methinks there are too many "dumb dogs" and "hireling shepherds" in some of the churches nowadays.

Twenty years ago, I saw Dunedin, when it was a rambling collection of miserable wooden shanties. The cutting through Bell's Hill was not then finished. If I mistake not, it was of Dunedin mud in those days that the following satire was concocted:—

"A new chum, walking along the quaking morass that was then the street (so the story goes), espied a nice new hat on the surface of the treacherous mire. Presumably he was a web-footed stranger, for he sallied out to pick up the hat. To his surprise it was clutched firmly on both sides by two bunches of digits, and he perceived it was being held on the head of some subterranean wearer. 'Hallo!' shouted the N. C., making a speaking-trumpet of his hands, "You are surely in a bad way down there?' 'Oh, no! I'm all right,' came the muffled reply. 'I'm on the top of an omnibus.'"

The streets are very different now. Well paved, well scavengered, and with horse-trams running in all directions, they redound to the credit of the city management. They have not been idiotic enough to try and make the trains do the work of

a city railway, and consequently the public are well served.

The Water of Leith, with Nichol's Falls, are well worthy of a visit. Farther up, through the saddle above the falls, a recent discovery has been made, which bids fair to introduce a new industry. This is a deposit of shale, specimens of which have been sent home, and have been pronounced by experts there to be of more than usual excellence. It is in contemplation to erect machinery and start works at an early date, and, if all I hear be correct, there is no doubt that a highly remunerative industry will be inaugurated.

From shale and sermons to beer. Dunedin beer fairly rivals the renowned brews of Auld Reekie. The populace seem also to have very fair powers of imbibition. There are no less than seven breweries in and around the city. This is in keeping with almost every other branch of industry. It is much overdone. Competition has cut prices down to the point at which legitimate profits have almost entirely vanished.

For keen business competition Dunedin fairly "cows the gowan," as a Scotchman would say. In this respect it puts Aberdeen to the blush, and outrivals the Burra Bazaar of Calcutta. The fact is admitted by the merchants themselves that there is no cohesion among them. They will not combine. They all do a "cutting game," and while the result cannot but be beneficial to the purchasing public, I cannot see how the sellers can reap much of a rich reward. Several

instances came under my observation, in which a little combination as regards certain commodities with which the market was insufficiently stocked, might have raised prices very materially and given the merchant a legitimate profit on his scanty stocks. But no! Each was afraid of the other forestalling him, or springing a surprise on him; and, indeed, in some cases, a smart man might have bought goods in Dunedin, and shipping them to Melbourne or Sydney have realized a respectable profit on his transaction. Every merchant I spoke to on this subject deplored the existence of such a spirit, and yet such I suppose are the exigencies of trade, and the keenness of the competition, that no one could afford to take his stand, and hold for a rise. In other words, it seems to me that there is barely sufficient trade in Dunedin to keep all the traders going. The cry of dull trade was no bugbear in Dunedin.

The West Coast connection has always been an important and valuable one for Dunedin. The mining communities on the West Coast prefer to get their supplies from Otago; but they dearly like also to "spoil the Egyptians," in the shape of Dunedin men, whenever they get a chance. The Dunedinites, it would seem, have rather arrogated to themselves the reputation of being preternaturally knowing, and maintain rather a supercilious attitude as regards the intellectual, commercial, or other acumen of outsiders. So it becomes a study with the West Coast speculator "how *to do* Dunedin," i.e. it is considered no in-

fraction of any moral obligation, but rather a laudable achievement, to beguile the Dunedinite out of his money under any pretence whatever. And so the merry old game of mining swindle has been played with variations more or less intricate, for the last two decades at least. Enormous sums of Dunedin capital have been invested in perfectly worthless enterprises on the West Coast; and a swindling speculation which consists in puffing up a "duffer claim," or rigging up a reputation for a worn-out mine, is a favourite occupation with many keen-witted characters in New Zealand. The claim, or mine, so manipulated, is called "A Wild Cat." There are many legitimate mining enterprises, and a wide field for *bonâ-fide* investment, on the gold-fields of New Zealand, but let the prudent man beware of "Wild Cats."

Just as a Highlander of the days of our grandfathers looked on smuggling as a virtue, and cheating and hoodwinking the gauger as an honourable achievement; so the Reefton promoter or projector looks on a Dunedinite as his fair, natural, and legitimate prey.

I make bold to say, however, as the result of my own rather limited observation, that in the long run the Wild Cats get rather the worst of the rubber with the Dunedin men. This mutual game of "Beggar my Neighbour" does not, as may be imagined, tend to elevate the moral tone of the people. "Trade fictions," to use a mild phrase, are considered justifiable; and of a great many

of the statements which the ordinary Dunedinite may make to you on 'Change, on the wharf, or on the market-place, you might be pardoned if you again used the caution of the Caledonian, and whispered quietly to yourself, "Ou aye! if a' stories be true, that ane's no' a lee."

Of course I was prepared to find the atmosphere intensely Scotch. It was delightful to hear the dear auld Scottish tongue, to note the Scottish names of streets, and mark the prevailing Scottish nomenclature on the sign-boards. But I was scarcely prepared to find the very wine-cards in the hotels transmogrified from French, to Scotch; and yet on perusing the wine-carte at the Grand Hotel we found the French "St. Julien Medoc" figuring as St. Julien M'Doe. This was transposition with a vengeance surely.

I do not know whether Dunedin human nature be abnormally litigious or not, but this I will aver—that if all the solicitors and legal practitioners of sorts who exercise their calling in the city, make a good living out of their clients, it would argue that litigation is pretty lively. As with commerce, so I should imagine with law—it is surely overdone. The city swarms with solicitors. One well-known legal firm of high standing, and in the enjoyment of a splendid practice, have a suite of offices that are probably unequalled for sumptuousness in any town anywhere. The offices are worthy of a visit. The granite pillars at the doors were specially imported. The rooms and

lobbies are replete with every modern device for luxury and adornment. Gildings glisten from floor to ceiling. In the centre is a dome of stained glass, more in keeping with a summer palace on the Bosphorus or Guadalquivir than within the precincts of a lawyer's sanctum. If the magnificence of the offices be at all a fair index to the scale of fees, no wonder Otago litigants are impoverished and complaints of dull times are rife.

A very beautiful cemetery crowns one of the overlooking eminences, on the north of the town ; and, from its shady walks and terraces, you can look down on the busy human hive. The long, irregular town spreads away southward at your feet. There is the dark-blue mass of the University, laved by the waters of the Leith Burn, and admirably set off by the quaint red-brick buildings, of Queen Anne style of architecture, which form the residences of the staff of professors. Farther along, the imposing bulk of the hospital looms up from the valley, and then beyond, the graceful spire of the Knox Church, the aspiring altitude of the Town Hall, and crowning the heights, terrace on terrace of really beautiful houses with artistically laid-out grounds, and the Boys' and Girls' High Schools, the convent, the cathedral, and other great buildings breaking the continuity and evidencing the importance of the city. In fact nothing better perhaps is better calculated to give the visitor an idea of the push, energy, "go" of Dunedin, than to see how the citizens have made the most of their difficulties of site. Great hills

have been scarped away to make room for villas. Roads have been cut right into the solid rock, chasms have been bridged and gullies filled, terraces and gardens formed somewhat after the similitude of the hanging gardens of Babylon, so far as elevation is concerned ; and yet every now and then you come on a bit of the old original bush, right in the heart of an environment of houses and gardens. So that, as you look around, upward and downward, and reflect that all this lavish display of architectural and horticultural adornment has been the work of only some twenty years, and that it has been achieved in face of natural difficulties which force themselves on the attention of the most cursory and unthinking observer, you begin to realize that the Dunedinites must have come of a good stock, and that they do well to be proud of their natural progress.

I do most sincerely hope that the present cloud of commercial depression may speedily lift, and that the wheels of trade may run merrily as of yore.

CHAPTER XVII.

The Bluff—Bleak and inhospitable view—Miserable railway arrangements—First impressions—Cheerless ride to Invercargill—Forestry neglected—Shameful waste—The timber industry—Necessity for reform—Pioneering—The usual Australian mode—The native method—A contrast—Invercargill—A large farm—Conservatism of the farming classes—Remenyi's anecdotes.

WE have thus tracked the much-talked-of depression down to earth. We have followed the cry of "dull times" all through the islands; and here at last, in Dunedin, we have found some faint echoes with the ring of truth in them. Before entering into any inquiry or speculation as to causes and possible remedies, let me finish my descriptive remarks by detailing briefly what we saw at Invercargill and the Bluff, and then, with the reader's permission, we may devote a chapter or two, profitably, to a consideration of one or two deductions from what we have observed, and take a glance in closing at some of the moral, social, and intellectual phases of life in this land which is so rich in natural beauties and scenic marvels.

We drew up alongside the dreary wharf at the Bluff on May 29. It may be necessary to

mention for the edification of my readers that this is the most southerly point of call for ocean-going steamers to New Zealand.

The Bluff is a good instance of what is at first so puzzling to a new arrival from the old country, namely, the antipodean order of things. He has been so accustomed all his life to associate cold weather, snowy hills, bleak moorlands, and wintry skies with the "inhospitable north ;" and warmth, colour, foliage, and all the delights of balmy summer with the "sunny south," that he gets "considerably mixed," as a Yankee would say, to find that in New Zealand the farther south he goes he gets the less sun ; and if he happens to experience the same weather as we did at the Bluff, he will begin to think that he has taken farewell of the sun altogether.

Now it does seem like a confession of weakness and want of straw, so to speak, to begin a chapter by a disquisition on the weather, and yet the elements cannot be left out in any description of the Bluff.

If there is any other place at the Antipodes where more piercing blasts are to be experienced, accompanied by gusts of sleet and rain ; if there is anywhere else in the wide world, a more unsheltered, forsaken, "waste-howling wilderness" than the Bluff, well, I don't want to see it ; that's all. The Bluff is quite enough for me ! I saw it in somewhat similar circumstances twenty years ago, and it does not seem to have altered much since then. There are possibly a few more

houses, and bigger shops. The wharves are somewhat more extensive, and the railway buildings have been added. There was a railway twenty years ago ; that I distinctly remember, because an enthusiastic Bluffite got a shovel, and dug a sort of pit in the drifted sand, and showed me the rails, but there was no train then. The line was blocked by the sanddrifts, and possibly also because the provincial treasury-chest was at ebb-tide.

There is a train now. It is the coldest, most comfortless train I ever rode in. The railway officials seem like the old rails, to have been dug out of a sanddrift too. One individual, who seemed to be invested with authority, was about the most sluggish in his movements of any official I remember to have ever met. He professed the most sublime ignorance of the time-table, or possibly was too lazy to give the asked-for information. Surely any fool, he evidently thought, coming to the Bluff, should know at what hours the trains ran. At any rate he acted as if such were his mental excogitations. The miserable pigeon-hole, or trapdoor, through which the bits of pasteboard are purveyed, was kept inexorably shut till exactly one minute after the train was timed to start. This, in spite of frequent knockings by a troop of fellow-passengers, who were already depressed enough by what they had seen of the Bluff. Of course, then, the guard began to fuss, the engine-driver to cuss, the solitary porter to "muss," and things rapidly got "wuss."

The first applicant for a ticket tendered a one-pound note.

"Ain't ye got no smaller change?" came querulously from the official.

"No."

"Well, I can't change it. Ye'll have to wait."

The next man "planked" a half-sovereign, and received his ticket.

I put down a sovereign, and sharply demanded both tickets and change. Now, whether some subordinate had in the meantime been over to the public-house or store for change, or whether my attitude and tone signified that there might be trouble about, I know not, but there was no difficulty raised in my case. The poor second-class passenger, however, who had proffered his pound, was kept waiting in the cold for some minutes, until at length he managed to get an accommodating friend on the platform to negotiate the desired exchange for him.

Now "little straws show the drift of the current." We are all unconsciously influenced very much by first impressions. I can fancy a party of immigrants coming out to New Zealand; their hearts beating with ardent resolves, fond fancies, and high hopes, being at once chilled and disappointed by the bleak, wintry, inhospitable aspect of the Bluff; but if, in addition, they were doomed to a dose of that railway official, I can imagine the suicide statistics going up to a hitherto unapproached percentage. The man deserves promotion. He would be invaluable as a Ministerial Under-Secretary to

receive deputations, or answer questions in Parliament. He merits much the sort of promotion Haman got.

At length we started for Invercargill. The wind howled dismally across the sandy dunes and flax-covered mounds. It screamed and whistled across the broad shallow bay, and dashed the blurring, blinding rain in at every crevice of the rattle-trap carriages. Far away over a dim, misty, flat expanse, we got one last peep of the distant snowy sierras. Then down again came the intensified veil of misty clearlessness and hissing sleet.

The ride to Invercargill was cheerless in the extreme. Here and there we pass a train track into the once plentiful bush, now getting sadly thinned. There are several saw-mills on the railway-line, and sidings, piled high with planks and square timber. Every year sees the country denuded of its best timbers, and yet such is the Bæotian stupidity of the average Anglo-Saxon colonist that no organized scientific effort is made to fill the gaps, and ensure a continuity of the supply. Verily, the progress of humanity is a slow process.

How often do we hear the poor bewildered doubter ask, in an agony of vain regret, "If there be a God, why doth He yet permit this evil, or that abuse?" And yet the same doubter will wax eloquent as he expounds what he is pleased to call the Gospel of Humanity. He exalts the human intellect, and indulges in glowing anticipations of the unerring fate, which is working toward the time when "men shall be as gods, knowing good

from evil." But it is the fashion nowadays to put all the blame on God. Our doubter quarrels with Omnipotence, and the All Wise, "whose ways are not as our ways," because the mysteries of being, the operations of spirit, the deep problems of man's moral nature are not all brought into harmony with his own crude, imperfect ideas of what should be, at once, by a mere fiat, by a creative instantaneous act. "And lo, man being in honour, abideth not. He is like the beasts that perish." Take this matter of forest-felling, for instance, how short-sighted, how crass, how like "the beasts that perish." What amazing stupidity; what shameless greed; what want of foresight, or criminal indifference to results! Has not the lesson been proclaimed over and over again that wholesale denudation of the forests of a country will exact its retribution in widespread ruin and desolation? Forest management has attained the rank almost of an exact science now. It has its literature, its schools, its laws; but they do seem to be as a dead letter to New Zealanders, and not, alas! to them alone. Occasionally a warning voice is raised, a mild protest appears spasmodically at intervals in some country journal; but who can touch the callous heart of the lumberer and timber contractor? Who can prick his seared conscience? "Let it last my time" is all the aspiration of his creed. "Let those that come after me shift for themselves" is the selfish cry that echoes in the emptiness of his inmost soul, and finds expression in his conduct. The legislator who would attempt a remedy; the

reformer who would stay the hand of the spoiler, and insist on construction and destruction proceeding simultaneously, is denounced as a dreamer, is hounded down as an obstructive. Vested interests stir up ignorance and fanaticism, and the spoiler has his way. There is no piercing the thick hide of self-interest. You cannot perforate the greedy man's armour.

Now the timber industry of New Zealand is a vast one. Millions of capital must be invested in it, and thousands are dependent on it for their subsistence. There is no need to stop timber-getting. There is no necessity to close a single saw-mill. But surely the plain lessons of experience and the monitions of common sense might be acted on.¹

If self-interest, or patriotism, or intelligence will not make individuals act, then the general intelligence should be roused to interfere. The State should frame its policy so that indiscriminate havoc should not be made with the forests. Replanting should be insisted on, of acre for acre corresponding to what is annually cut down. Waste should be punished. Strict supervision should be exercised. The classes in the commonwealth, other than those engaged or interested in the timber trade, should have their interests conserved ; and forestry, in a word, should be taught and practised, and the industry made subject to the same restrictions in kind, as have been found to be beneficial in India, Germany, and other countries, where public attention has been awakened, and the subject scientific.

¹ See Appendix I., Professor Kirk's report.

cally studied. It has been found good for the common weal to legislate for factory workers, for miners, for mariners, for sportsmen, for farmers even, to impose certain restrictions and formulate rules; why should it not be done with lumberers and sawyers? It is no reply to say, "Oh, the forests will last our time." Surely we have a duty to posterity in this matter. I am so convinced of the evil that is being done, of the sinfulness of the wasteful methods that are allowed, that I cannot refrain from adding my feeble protest to that of others abler than myself, who have from time to time uplifted their testimony in favour of a reform in the present conditions of forest administration. And in a hundredfold greater degree is it necessary for New South Wales.

You speak on the subject with your fellow-tourists. They agree with you that "something should be done." You refer to it in your conversations with farmers, theologians, legislators, merchants, squatters, hotel-keepers, and shop-keepers. Yes, they agree with you that the present state of matters is wrong; that the best kinds of timber are fast becoming scarcer; that the supply at this rate cannot last for ever; that there is enormous preventible waste; that even firewood near the towns is becoming dearer; that the present want of system is rotten; anything you like—excepting that it is any business of theirs to help forward public opinion, to check abuses, and institute reformed methods. Here in Southland vast areas, while they have not been

made one whit more adapted for settlement, have simply been despoiled of all that made the land valuable to the State. Some few individuals have been enriched, but the country has been impoverished to an extent that would appal the heavily-taxed farmer, and general consumer, could he be only made properly cognizant of the fact. In some parts where public roads had been made, or telegraph-lines constructed through bush country, I have seen millions of magnificent logs, each of them containing hundreds of square feet of sound, merchantable timber, burnt like so much stubble, or tumbled together pell-mell to rot, to breed putridity, to become a loathsome eyesore, to raise one's gorge, at the reckless, sinful waste of God's good gifts to man.

I saw several such roads in the North Island. Had a portable saw-mill—or, for the matter of that, where one could go ten could go—had portable saw-mills accompanied the road party, enough timber might have been cut to go far toward defraying every penny of the expense of forming the highway. 'Tis true the road might have taken longer time to make, the initial expense might have been greater; but in no country that I am acquainted with would the returns from sawn timber have been so absolutely ignored and contemptuously rejected as an item of reimbursement as in New Zealand and, shall I say it, in Australia too.

Or take the average settler, pioneering in a bush district. All the timber he fells is indiscriminately burned. That is so! Is it not? It is un-

doubtedly generally the case. Well, I, too, have been a pioneer, and have had my fair share of clearing to do. The method of my procedure, which was not different from the general custom there, was to cut down all useless undergrowth and small timber first. I next selected such trees as I intended to retain as permanent shelter. Of course, this would depend largely on the uses to which it was intended to put the land. My own experience and my reading have taught me that, whether you are clearing for pastoral or agricultural purposes, it is wise always to retain a few trees to the acre. In clumps to be preferred. Sometimes I would leave a pretty wide belt, and wherever the soil was light and poor, I would invariably retain the primal forest on such spots, until I could put in plantations of more useful trees.

Thus you provide for shelter, a most important desideratum, either for flocks or crops. You also cause less disturbance of atmospheric and climatic conditions ; and there are other advantages, not to speak of the beauty, which accrue from this plan, but which, as this is not a treatise on land management, cannot be given here.

You next proceed to fell the forest trees. I used invariably to lop judiciously, burn what could not be used ; but if bark was of any use, it was saved. If charcoal could be made from the loppings it was made, and the logs, barked and stripped of branches, were next cut into convenient lengths, and stacked until such time as I could sell them or saw them up. In Germany

the chemical products from the destructive distillation of wood form a handsome source of revenue in themselves. The reserve stock of timber thus secured may serve the wants of generations. I do not think it relevant to say that such a mode might be all very fine for India, or France, or Germany, or Great Britain, but it would not pay in Australia. I say, give it a trial and see. "It wouldn't pay" is too often the cry of ignorance and sheer laziness.

The usual Australian mode, as my readers must know, is to cut and slash and burn indiscriminately everything, and very often the timber that goes to build the settler's habitation has to be bought actually from some foreign importation. Surely in this vaunted age of enlightenment and utilitarianism such methods are worse than imbecile—they are sinful.

I have heard it said that "there are three things in this world which deserve no quarter: Hypocrisy, pharisaism, and tyranny." To these I would add a fourth, "waste."

Instances might be indefinitely multiplied. Is a paling post wanted, or a log for a culvert, or a rail to stop a gap, the nearest forest king is straightway hacked down, leaving frequently three or four feet of the very prime stuff in the ground. One length is cut up, and possibly as much precious material left wantonly to rot as would suffice almost to keep a family for a month under better management.

It is true a few faint, but none the less laudable,

beginnings have been made. I know one lover of his kind who has for years been making experimental plantings of the most likely trees in New South Wales. My brother, in his parish, has set an example which is happily being followed largely by his people. In South Australia, in Victoria—even in the sometime laggard New South Wales—some little is being done to stay ruthless waste ; to improve forest administration and introduce new supplies of fresh kinds of timber. Near Wanganui I saw plantations, 'tis true, and the Government must be credited with good intentions in giving grants of land as a guerdon for tree-planting ; and, yet, how much more might be done. Oh ! surely if waste be sinful—as I believe it to be—might not preachers and teachers deviate occasionally from their sickening platitudes, to preach practical lessons of thrift and economy in such directions as I have been endeavouring to indicate ? Surely it would be worthy of a patriot or statesman—yea even of a three-hundred pound a year hireling—to devote a little time to the elucidation of such economic problems as are contained in wise and prudent forest administration.

Or—let us look at the matter in yet one more light before we leave the subject. Here is a country so bountifully endowed with natural advantages, that at Gisborne, at Wairepa, at Auckland, at Christchurch, out of a score of places, I have seen trees whose one year's growth has been twelve feet in height. We find in possession a savage, cannibal, tattooed race, who, if they wanted

a canoe, would select the most suitable tree with care, and expend infinite toil in carving it for its required use. If they wanted to build a whare, the trees were as carefully selected, and as judiciously used. There was no wanton disfigurement of the grand gallery of illustration which the Great Architect had painted in such resplendent beauty and such magnificent variety on the fair face of hill and dale. But at last comes civilized man; the last greatest crowning effort of the "selection" of the ages; the "fittest" inhabitant of this sublunary sphere. And what do we behold? Already the reckless devastation has been so great, that ruin impends over more than one deforested district. There are places where firewood actually costs as much as bread; and still we boast of our civilization, and hug ourselves in the intoxication of our self-worship, and "thank God that we are not as this poor Maori." Let him that readeth, reflect.

Why, even in sleepy Tasmania, where the forests are much more dense than New Zealand, the remarkable Huon Pine, once so plentiful all over the West Coast, is all but exterminated; and a legislative enactment has recently been passed, so I am informed, *forbidding farther cutting of Huon Pine for a period of fifty years*. I cannot refrain from italics. Is not this a caustic commentary on what some of my readers may have been pooh-poohing at, and regarding me in their hearts as a garrulous "gowk," for presuming to speak as I have done.

Meantime, we are still shivering in the cheerless railway carriage on the slow road to Invercargill. The rain is plashing and dashing more determinedly than ever, and it is evident we are not to see Invercargill under favourable auspices.

And yet I was agreeably surprised at the extent of the town. It is well laid out on a great flat plain, with gravelly soil, and therefore healthy. The streets are rectangular, and of a regal width. It was most pleasing to note that the streets are being planted with shade trees, and some day they will be fine boulevards. The most enormous building in the city is Walter Guthrie's woodware factory. Surely in advance of the requirements of the place. There is a spacious crescent leading up from the railway station, some excellent hotels therein, and four handsome bank buildings where the main street intersects the crescent.

Of course on such a depressing day, the general appearance was not inspiriting; but there is a large surrounding country, for which Invercargill is the emporium, and as settlement increases a steady business must always be done. At present it has reached the nadir of its depression. A shallow estuary from the sea reaches to the town. It is called the New River. Small craft can come up on a flood tide, but the sea outlet is, of course, at the Bluff.

The usual industries of a colonial town are carried on—brickworks, breweries, tanneries, soap-works, saw-mills, &c. The chief exports are sawn timber and grain, principally oats.

The New Zealand Agricultural Company has a splendid freehold estate in Southland, the province of which Invercargill is the capital; and some idea of the productive capacity of the soil, and the importance of the farming interest may be gathered from a bare recital of what that one estate has done this season. Mr. Valentine, the manager, a bright, intelligent Aberdonian, sowed over 6000 acres with oats, and did not lose an acre. It averaged about sixty bushels to the acre. In addition, he has 5000 acres sown with wheat, which usually averages forty bushels per acre. Mr. Valentine farms on scientific principles, not by "rule of thumb." The secret of his exemption from the vexatious losses that visit his neighbours, he attributes to his early autumn sowings. And yet his neighbours will not follow his lead.

How awfully conservative is the old farmer class! How terribly difficult to move out of the old routine! Even the gods fight in vain against stupidity.

Remenyi, the world-renowned violinist, with whom I had the good fortune to travel from the Bluff, gave me one or two admirable anecdotes bearing on this very point.

"Potatoes, for instance," said the maestro. "It is a plant that does delight in moisture; but the old-world farmers did always plant it on the top of the ridge. The American Farmer, he did notice that the best potatoes did grow in the hollow. He did reverse the old plan; and now everybody will see how much better is the new plan." This told

in his broken English was more entertaining than any reproduction I can give.

To illustrate the proverbial grumbling of the average bucolic swain, he told a good anecdote which he heard Francis Deak, the Hungarian patriot statesman, tell.

Deak, whose nobility of soul would allow him to accept of no return for his splendid and disinterested services to his country, used occasionally to spend a few weeks' pleasant retirement from the cares of politics, at the farm of a well-to-do brother-in-law in the country.

On his arrival, on one occasion, he found his host and relative in a very bad humour—brow clouded, manner abrupt and unamiable; and on asking what was the matter, his query elicited a querulous burst of bewailing over his wretched bad fortune.

"Why, what's the matter?" queried the statesman; "potatoes failed?"

"Oh, no; potatoes are a good crop."

"Vines blighted, then?"

"No; the vineyards have borne well."

"Wheat a failure?"

"No; wheat and corn have given an abundant harvest."

"Well, what in the world are you bemoaning? Potatoes, vines, corn, wheat all excellent. What can have gone wrong? Are the cattle dying?"

"No, no!" responded the rich Hungarian; "but I tried a half acre of poppy this year, and it has turned out a dead failure."

"Ah, me!" said Deak. "How many of us think only of our half-acre of poppies, forgetful of the myriad good things which fall daily to our lot."

The closing note I find recorded about Southland is that it contains the finest herd of black-polled Angus cattle in the southern hemisphere. These form the famous Waimea herd, near Gore, which has taken the first prize for this class wherever shown in Australia.

CHAPTER XVIII.

Education in New Zealand—School buildings—Opinion of a high authority—The order of educational arrangements—Professor Black's mining lectures—Scheme for instruction to miners—Technical education—Political parasites.

TO turn now more to the social than the physical features of the colony. After the neatness and numbers of the churches, perhaps the next thing that most strikes a reflective observer is the attention that is paid to education, as exemplified in the number of schools, colleges, seminaries, and other educational buildings one meets. Although possessing a considerably more rigorous and mutable climate than New South Wales, the school buildings, as a rule, are not nearly so pretentious and expensive in New Zealand as they are in the former colony. This one fact alone speaks well for the practical nature of the people. In New South Wales enormous sums of money have been needlessly spent in erecting stone buildings far in advance of the requirements of the times. The schools are mostly built of wood in country districts in New Zealand. They are comfortable and neat. The children generally are taught together in class on the floor ; but in the benches and at the

desks the boys occupy one side of the school and the girls the other. The school furniture is fully up to modern requirements. All the teachers I met—and I tried to get speech of as many as I could—were very intelligent, and possessed of considerable *esprit de corps*. In such cities as Wellington, Christchurch, Dunedin, &c., the high schools were indeed quite palatial looking, and some of the private educational institutions were not more admirable in their interior arrangements for the comfort and health of the pupils, than imposing externally from an architectural point of view.

I had the privilege and good fortune to meet some of the highest and most honoured authorities on educational subjects in the colony. I found a very generally expressed opinion that the existing system errs on the side of liberality. The burden of the educational impost presses heavier on the people every year. In fact, free education is felt by many now to have been a political blunder. It was never wanted. In the bitter outcry against sectarian teaching on the part of large masses, the advocates of free education stole a march, and succeeded in getting their whole programme of free, secular, and compulsory education swallowed entire, like a bolus. Many now think that the giving up of the revenue derived from fees was a useless, nay, a harmful surrender. What costs nothing, say they, is generally not valued much by the recipient, and anything which tends to sap the citadel of personal responsibility and individual

independence is bad for the self-reliance of the citizen.

"In Dunedin," as a venerable and learned friend put it to me, "In Dunedin, no one objected to school fees. There were only a very few poor widows who could not afford to pay ; and provision was always made for the children of such, without any one being any the wiser. The old instincts of Scottish independence revolted at the thought of parental responsibility being shirked in the matter of the education of their children. It was held as an article of faith by the majority, that it was as incumbent on a parent to provide food for the growth and development and nourishment of the child's mind as for his body. The result of free education by the State is," pursued my friend, "very much to beget a feeling of entire indifference on the subject on the part of many, and a general weakening of the sense of parental responsibility almost along the whole line." I try to reproduce our exact conversation. Said I, "But you would have education compulsory?" "Undoubtedly ; but if parents complied with the requirements of the law in respect of attainments, and were willing to pay out of their own pockets direct, why should they be forced to make their children attend this or that school, or submit them to the tuition of this or that teacher? That I think an unwise and an unnecessary compulsion. I do not wonder at one section of the community kicking against such a sweeping and arbitrary enactment. It savours of persecution, and I would resent it myself."

"But does it not ensure greater economy in working, and greater efficiency, and better results to have a compulsory State system? Would not the latitude you advocate tend to the multiplication of sectarian and denominational schools?"

"What has that to do with the justice of the case? But I do not think it would. The Free Church of Scotland had hundreds of schools, and she was very glad, indeed, to hand them over to the school boards. They had always been a heavy burden, the bearing of which had fallen almost exclusively on the minister, who had already too much to attend to, if he was really to carry on his own peculiar pastoral work, and attend to his public ministrations with any degree of acceptance and success. The consequences have been all for good, in the case of the Free Church of Scotland, and I do not think that, with the exception of the Roman Catholic Church, and possibly a section of the Anglican, any movement in the direction of having schools separate from the State schools will ever be made here."

"But would not the secularists object?"

"What matter if they did? I do not think that secularism is so strong as some people would like to make out. There is a distinct reaction against it here in this community." (We were speaking of Dunedin at the time.) "The feeling that I am glad to say is gaining strength amongst us is, that the Bible should be read in all the public schools. I would apply the principle of

local option to Bible teaching, as to whisky selling. If the majority of the people in a country town—were will say Balclutha, for instance,—wished to have the Bible taught in their schools, why should the veto of Dunedin prevent it, and *vice versa*? Of course, to obviate individual hardships, any child might have exemption from attendance on the Bible classes under a conscience clause."

"But suppose the Catholics and Anglicans did set up separate schools, would they not demand a share of the proceeds of the education cess, as a result of your proposed modifications?"

"Well, and they might have it! I would allow," said my reverend old friend, "I would allow a capitation grant from the general revenue, conditional on the child passing the secular standard established by the Government educational department. In Canada there is an education rate, and Catholics are there allowed to pay over their rates to their own schools, whether high or elementary. All are, of course, inspected and examined by the Government officials, only the Government does not examine in religious teaching. This has worked admirably there, and is the best and fairest compromise that could be made between the advocates of purely secular teaching on the one hand, and denominationalism on the other."

I give this conversation as being the boldly-expressed opinions of a representative man. I found they were shared by the majority of the intelligent colonists I spoke to on the subject. There was evidently in Otago and Canterbury a

reaction against secularism pure and simple, and the advocates of Bible teaching in schools would in my opinion poll an immense majority if it came to a vote.

The order of educational arrangements is briefly thus :—

The first step is the primary school. These primary schools are thickly scattered over the length and breadth of the land. Attached to every school is a glebe and house for the teacher. A system of what is called provincial scholarships is in force—so many for juniors and so many for seniors. These are open to the youth of both sexes, and are tenable for three years. They ensure the holder free education, either in a district high school or in such high schools as those of Dunedin, Christchurch, Wellington, Timaru, &c. In fact, all the principal towns boast of their high school.

In the “Otago boys and girls high schools Dunedin,” for instance, there are more than fifty resident pupils getting free education, who either hold provincial scholarships, or who, in the competition for these, have made fifty per cent. or over of the necessary marks. This, surely, is a liberal arrangement.

Some high schools again have a higher grade of scholarships ; these are tenable for three years also, are of the value of 40*l.* per annum, and the holders must take the arts course in the University of Otago. This University itself also offers two scholarships of similar value and condition.

The New Zealand University, which is merely an examining body, offers also every year about a dozen junior, and about half that number of senior scholarships. These are open to the whole colony. There are also exhibitions and scholarships founded by wealthy and patriotic patrons of learning, and the Otago University has at least one nomination for a military cadetship, at the Royal Military College at Sandhurst.

The scholarships of the University of Otago are of three kinds: The Junior, of the annual value of 45*l.*; the Medical Scholarships, annual value 100*l.*; and the Senior, which are fixed each year by the Senate at its annual meeting. There are also money and book prizes for best essays, and other inducements to aspirants after academic distinctions. Altogether, the endowments and encouragements to students are on the most liberal and praiseworthy scale.

There has also been good organization among the teachers and professors, for mutual improvement. During the last seven years it has been the custom for the professors in Dunedin, to give Saturday lectures in turns, for a few months every year, to school teachers solely. The response by the teachers has been most cheering. Hundreds come down every Saturday during the course, from a radius of eighty miles from the city. The teachers pay a guinea to the Government for their ticket, which entitles them to admission to the lectures, and their railway carriage to and fro. A most liberal concession! The movement, three

years ago, extended to Christchurch, and is now a fixed institution there, and it is now being started in Wellington.

It would be well if some such admirable custom could be inaugurated in connection with our splendid Sydney University.

This is not the only evidence of the practical good sense and energy which the educational bodies in New Zealand bring to bear on their work.

Last year the Otago University Council, recognizing the need of practical instruction in many departments of industry outside the academic walls as well as inside, tried the experiment of sending Professor Black to the mining centres to lecture to the miners, and the result was a pronounced success. The subject is of such practical importance to communities such as ours, in a young country where minerals are of such frequent occurrence, that I make no apology for transcribing copiously from Professor Black's report.

The professor first of all went to the mining centres on the West Coast, where there are extensive gold-fields. There he says :

"I delivered forty-four lectures at fifteen different places, and established testing classes at nine centres. The attendance at the classes was very satisfactory, many miners in several districts taking a holiday during my visit, so as to avail themselves more fully of the testing classes.

"At Boatman's, near Reefton, I was joined by

Mr. Alex. Montgomery, M.A. of this University (Otago), on March 14th, and during the remainder of the tour he was of the greatest assistance to me, taking an active part in every department of the work. Mr. Montgomery also delivered lectures on 'Geology, Mineral Veins, Faults,' &c., in Greymouth, Kumara, Hokitika, and Ross, and visited the coal-mines at Koranui, Coalbrookdale, and Brunner, as well as several of the largest quartz reef mines at Reefton, Boatman's, and Lyell. Mr. Montgomery's lectures, like my own, were very well received everywhere, and a strong desire was expressed in many quarters that he should be available for carrying on this kind of teaching in the district. The subjects of my lectures were the following:—1. How quartz reefs were formed. 2. How gold came into the reefs. 3, 4, and 5. The chemistry of gold. 6. The extraction of gold from quartz. 7. The chlorine process for extracting gold. 8. Sodium amalgam, and its use in saving gold. 9. The amalgamation of copper plates, and the removal of gold from them. 10. The analysis and assay of gold-bearing stone. 11. The ores and metallurgy of silver, lead, tin, copper, antimony, zinc, mercury. 12. The chemistry of sheelite, &c.

"In the testing classes the students themselves went through the processes for testing metallic ores containing the metals named above, Mr. Montgomery having charge of the blowpipe processes, whilst I directed the wet chemical operations.

"In the more important centres, when the miners were beginning to see how simple and practical were the methods of testing ores, they began to form themselves into clubs (subscribing usually 1*l.* each) to procure the appliances necessary for carrying on the testing of ores after my departure. Before the end of April ten of these clubs were in existence, with their chairmen and secretaries, and funds subscribed, with a membership ranging from thirteen to thirty-five each, total membership about 200. At two other places, clubs were being formed when I was just leaving the coast. The following are the centres where clubs are now in existence:—Reefton, Boatman's, Lyell, Westport, Waimangaroa, Greymouth, Kumara, Hokitika, Ross, Goldsbrough; and in process of formation at Dillmanstown and Rimu. Public meetings were held in most of the centres to apply to the Government and the University of Otago for assistance in the way of instructors and facilities for procuring appliances at the smallest cost.

"During my whole visit I received the warmest support, not only from the miners and the civic authorities, but also from the clergymen of all denominations, medical men, and druggists. The press also very heartily advocated the movement, and published elaborate reports of the processes of testing. During my visit to the coast, as well as to the Otago gold-fields, I was strongly impressed with the large field open for teaching to crowds of

intelligent men such subjects as geology, mineralogy, the use of the blowpipe, the chemistry of minerals, the extraction of metals from their ores. The men are there thirsting for this kind of knowledge. They at present present the saddening spectacle of standing together in clubs, with funds subscribed for procuring chemicals, books, and apparatus, but with no one left to teach them the use of these appliances. There was never a better opportunity offered to any Government, or University authorities, of providing suitable means of instruction to so large a number of earnest students eager to receive it. And no body of students will make a better or more direct and immediate use of the instruction provided for them.

"Such instruction, if liberally provided, will convert very many of these miners into most intelligent prospectors, since they will then be able to identify a valuable ore when they find it (which is not the case at present). The country will reap a thousandfold in the development of its wonderful mineral resources any expenditure judiciously made in this direction.

"It is important that help to these clubs come soon if it is to come at all. It is much easier to keep them going now than it will be to resuscitate them again if they are allowed to die for lack of support. I need not say that it will give myself the greatest pleasure to take an active part during the summer holidays in carrying on the move-

ment so auspiciously begun in connection with your 'School of Mines.'"

The Professor was farther so impressed with the importance of the work thus auspiciously begun, that he has formulated a scheme which he forwarded to the Minister of Mines to provide special instruction in several branches of knowledge on the gold-fields.

The branches of knowledge embraced in this scheme are as follows:—"1. Geology, the general subject including modes of occurrence of useful minerals, prospecting for useful minerals by boring and otherwise. 2. Ore-dressing, including gold-saving machines, treatment of auriferous sulphides (sulphides of iron, copper, antimony, arsenic, &c.), the preparation of valuable ores for the market. 3. Mineralogy, including the wet and dry processes for determining minerals, the physical characters of useful minerals, instruction in the use of the blowpipe. 4. Metallurgy, including the characters, tests, and mode of occurrence of the ores of gold, silver, lead, mercury, copper, tin, antimony, iron, zinc, manganese, and cobalt, and the processes for smelting these metals or reducing them from their ores. 5. Analysis and Assaying, including practical instruction in the processes for assaying metallic ores. In these testing classes, which I regard as a most valuable part of the scheme, the students themselves will perform the work under the direction of the instructors. It is for the prosecution of this kind of work that the local schools of mines

have been formed. 6. Mine-surveying. 7. Mining—These, I think, may, in the meantime, be provided for by an arrangement with one or more of the local mining engineers." So much for Dr. Black's admirable syllabus.

Can any one doubt that the systematic carrying out of such a scheme as this would redound immensely to the credit of the Government, and to the welfare and progress of the mining community?

A Technical College has, in Sydney, New South Wales, been in existence for some years, and has of late been launching out upon a wider sea of enterprise, making tentative efforts in directions somewhat similar to the foregoing. Such efforts are a healthy sign of awakening interest in this important work of practical technical education. They are deserving of the warmest sympathy and commendation of every patriotic Australian; and the itinerary of one such lecturer is worth all the twaddle and fustian of all the stump politicians and demagogic nostrum-mongers who muster thick in Sydney, and who air their incoherent and in many cases antiquated and exploded theories with a vehemence and fervour which, if applied to some honest occupation—say breaking blue metal, for instance—would make even these wind-bags superior to all the frowns of fortune. Your political spouter and conference organizer, however, has a wholesome horror generally of hard work for himself. The golden gift of eloquence, or what he mistakably assumes to be its equivalent,

“glibness of gab,” is accepted by him as the direct guerdon of a kind Providence to enable him to live sumptuously on the proceeds of the hard work of others. Such men are the parasites of the body politic.

CHAPTER XIX.

The farming industry—Technical education for farmers—
An agricultural department a necessity—State of farming
in Australia—Slovenly methods—New products—
Necessity for experiment—Village settlement—Water
conservation—Futility of a protective policy.

THERE is in the Australian colonies, alas ! another branch of national industry, more ancient and honourable even than that of mining, and which is even more in need of the wise help of well-wishers, and the sympathy of friendly counsellors. We read and hear of much being done for the mining interest, and no one grudges all that is being done to elevate this most important industry to a position commensurate with its deserts. But what about the patient farmer and toiling husbandman ? What is being done by our universities, our governments, our politicians, to help forward the grand old primal industry, and to accentuate the homely old aspiration of "Speed the plough" ? Trades unions and guilds exist in plenty, by the laudable efforts of which the position of the artisan has been much ameliorated. Organizations exist, by which the class interests of special sections of the community are jealously guarded, and their rights and privileges conserved. But why is it we hear so

much in New South Wales, at least, of the poverty of the farmer; of the disabilities and drawbacks under which tillage labours; of the disinclination which undoubtedly exists among young Australians to take to the plough and become cultivators of the soil?

Is it that farmers are more divided, less intelligent, more indifferent and less energetic than the artisan and the miner? Surely, for the very honour's sake of the sower and reaper, we cannot say that.

Is it that the climate is too rigorous, our soil too poor, and our returns too scanty, our expenses too excessive, our fiscal policy too unaccommodating, our markets too limited, or our rulers too antagonistic and unsympathetic, that agricultural pursuits seem to languish? Some of all of these causes are assigned by various authorities; but whatever be the reason, it seems to be the common opinion that farming in Australia, as it is understood in the old country, does not pay. It is an undoubted fact that among the masses in general, much apathy and ignorance does exist on this most vital subject, the progress of our agricultural industry.

Now surely it will not be denied that farming is of equal importance to mining. It is certainly capable of more widespread application. It gives employment to more inhabitants in the State. It is, in fact, the industry *par excellence* which forms the basis and foundation of all others. All other implements, where usefulness is concerned, must

yield the place of honour to the ploughshare. And yet is it not a notorious fact that the practice and science of tillage is sadly neglected in Australia generally? Instances of wasteful and ignorant farming are not confined to New South Wales. They are common enough even in New Zealand. Surely if a school of mines is a necessity, a school of agriculture is not less so. (I merely select mining for the purpose of a comparison, and not with the intention of undervaluing its great importance). Yet certainly if lectures on metallurgy and mineralogy are valuable, instruction by practical experts in the chemistry of soils, the laws and phenomena of growth, the relations of climatic influences to varieties of products, and the experimental introduction of new plants, new processes, and new adaptations of natural and mechanical forces to the art and practice of cultivation, whether in field or garden, are of equal importance and desirability.

The plain fact is, I take it, that from a broad national point of view, the vast importance of farming, whether pastoral or agricultural, has been much under-estimated, if not altogether overlooked. Mining speculations, commercial undertakings, engineering works, explorations, politics and polemics have all loomed largely in the public eye ; but the work of the silent ploughshare, of the meditative, unobtrusive husbandman, has attracted little notice, either from the honest patriot or the scheming self-seeker. Farmers have been too widely scattered (one of the direct results, in New

South Wales, at least, of indiscriminate selection before survey), and have been too disunited, to make them attractive-enough material for the blandishments of the professional demagogue ; but the inevitable Nemesis which follows a disregard of Nature's laws is now forcing the question of agriculture to the front. Farmers' unions, too, have been established of late years ; and the farmer is now becoming an object of more interest to certain classes, who see in him a convenient peg on which to hang a pet nostrum, or a handy hack on which to ride some cherished hobby.

For myself personally, I can claim to have been a persistent and consistent advocate of the importance of our agricultural interests ever since I cast in my lot for good in this the land of my adoption. By writings, by lectures, by experiments, by distributing seeds and plants, by every influence I could command, I have never lost an opportunity of trying to rouse public attention to the vital importance of this much-neglected branch of our national industries. I have been a humble co-worker with some of the brightest and noblest spirits in the colonies ; but the most brilliant individual efforts are, after all, apt to get lost in the immensity of conflicting interests which agitate young and expanding communities such as these. The time has come when a Department of Agriculture should form part of our administrative machinery. A Minister of Agriculture is a necessity for New South Wales no less than for New Zealand. If Victoria, South Australia, India,

Canada, to say nothing of such countries as France, Germany, and other continental states, including even little Denmark, have found it a wise provision, surely the necessity is even greater for an imperfectly developed country like New South Wales? Experimental farms and schools of farming are badly wanted, and must be founded, if we are to keep pace with the achievements of other communities, utilize to the full our splendid possibilities, and hold our own in the march of material and mental progress.

I have already spoken of the wasteful methods in vogue with the New Zealand farmer; as, for instance, in the disposition of straw, neglect of manure, disregard of draining, and so on; but a much more serious matter is the exhaustion of the land in many of the earlier settled districts. Continuous cropping without rotation or rest has worked its usual result in Otago, Canterbury, and Southland, as in County Cumberland in New South Wales, and in other parts of Australia. The rotation of crops is part of the alphabet of agriculture; but it would seem as if Australian farmers were really, in some respects, ignorant of their first letters. Or is it that they are too lazy, or too greedy? "Soft words butter no parsnips!" Anyway, I believe soft soap is a poor salve. "Faithful are the wounds of a friend, but the kisses of an enemy are deceitful." It is the veriest folly to imagine that any soil, even the richest, can be cropped year after year with the same crop, and not become impoverished. Wheat,

for instance, takes a certain set of constituents from the soil. These must be given back in the form of manure, or the land inevitably becomes less able to grow wheat. Disease is at once a consequence and an evidence of insufficient nourishment. Hence many common crop diseases are Nature's protest against a direct infringement of her laws. It is probable that if lands round Camden,¹ we will say, had been well-manured, or if farming by rotation had been practised, rust might never have put in an appearance in County Cumberland. Now, in the earlier times, wheat seemed to be the ultimate limit beyond which the mind of the farmer never rose. Even now the bucolic mind is desperately conservative, and it seems hard to make the ordinary farmer understand that if wheat will not pay, something else might. Instead of resolutely tackling the problem of experimenting, of availing himself of all the modern discoveries and improvements in the

¹ Camden, a beautiful district in County Cumberland, New South Wales, is one of the earliest settled parts of the colony. It was here that wheat-growing was first introduced into Australia, and for years the rich soil gave returns so enormous, that the farmers in their foolishness cropped the soil to death. Subsequently rust made its appearance, and for many years wheat-growing has been abandoned, mills lie empty, silent, and unused, and sorrel, briars and weeds have taken the place of the golden leagues of waving grain. The farmers too grew lazy and inert. Fruit and grape growing has been tried latterly, but at the present moment phylloxera has made its appearance in some few vineyards in the district, and the Government are meditating measures for its extirpation.

They are *only* meditating. How long they will meditate before they will *act* it is impossible to say.

art and practice of agriculture, he too often gets led away by some irresponsible will-o'-the-wisp, in the shape of some glib-tongued theorist, who seeks a remedy for short crops and poor prices in such cabala as reciprocity, free-trade, protection, reduction of railway rates, and so on.

There is a certain text in an old-fashioned book which will persist in forcing itself on my memory when I hear the plausible specifics of such Sangrados. It is one of those proverbs which the scribes of Hezekiah copied out, and it is well worthy the attention of every farmer. It is a promise and a warning, which is peculiarly applicable to Australian farmers in the present juncture. It is this: "He that tilleth his land shall have plenty of bread; but he that followeth after vain persons shall have poverty enough."

When coffee in Ceylon was blasted by the blight which ruined more than half the planters, and nearly wrecked the prosperity of the island, what has been the result? It was seen how dangerous it was to rely on any one staple; how important not to have all the eggs of national prosperity in one basket. Now Ceylon is entering on a new and extended lease of renewed vigour and prosperity. Tea, cinchona, india-rubber, cocoa, and other products are yielding splendid returns, and much of this resuscitated life and re-awakened enterprise is due to the experimental gardens, and the work which has been done by planters and others in acclimatizing new plants and trying new products.

So, too, with Mauritius. The over-production of sugar, with the consequent collapse of the sugar market, brought the staple industry of Mauritius to the verge of extinction ; but now it is found that coffee, the aloe, china-grass, fibres, and other products can be successfully grown ; and it is certain that good, and not evil, will be the ultimate issue of present perplexities.

Surely such lessons are plain enough for us to learn them here.

All the schools and lectures and experiments in the world will not furnish the farmer with moral attributes. They will not provide him with thrift, energy, intelligence, industry ; but if in the possession of these, they will help him to use them to the best advantage, and I think it is in this way we can secure the most practical protection to the pristine profession, and give the most living impetus to the great agricultural industry.

Doubtless there are many drawbacks attendant on farming in Australia and New Zealand, such as want of capital, dearness and scarcity of labour, which act as a handicap on the struggling husbandman at the antipodes, but there are none the less grave grounds for reproach, and plenty of opportunities for candid self-examination and reform. Both in New Zealand and Australia, I have frequently observed with pain and regret the slovenliness and wastefulness of the methods employed by farmers in the ordinary work of the farm. There is frequently, too, the smug self-satisfaction of the incurably self-conceited egotist. Many

ignorant dunderheads are too self-complacent to "take a wrinkle;" too hopelessly obtuse to act on a hint; too slavishly wedded to antiquated custom to profit by the experience of others.

To give an instance: I once remonstrated with one man for burning the stalks of his maize crop. I informed him they were nutritive, contained much saccharine matter, could be chopped up and mixed with chaff and straw, and when moistened, and a little salt added, made an excellent fodder, and were so used by the Germans and by the cultivators of India. The old farmer only insulted me for my well-meaning bit of information; but a young neighbour of his took the hint, and it has resulted in a very considerable addition to his income.

Wherever any farmer has resolutely set himself to discard old, antiquated notions, and gone in for modern farming, availing himself of the use of modern labour-saving machinery, and growing such crops as were most readily saleable, growing them, too, on a scale large enough to enable him to concentrate work and expenditure, the result has, in every case I have observed, been a triumphant vindication of science over rule of thumb, and such men, though they may grumble at lots of things, do not blame either the soil, the climate, or the country.

If we in New South Wales can buy potatoes, wheat—nay, even cabbages, cheaper from Victorian, New Zealand, and South Australian farmers, the natural course is to buy them, and let our own

farmers turn their attention to something that will pay better. And so it is I advocate the establishment of experimental farms, and a department of agriculture as an imperative necessity, to say nothing of the beneficence of such a policy. There are drugs, dyes, fibres, fruits, oil-seeds, vegetables, timbers, barks, piths, nuts, roots, even mosses, weeds and fungi, with multitudes of valuable fodder plants, which are eminently suitable to our soil, adapted to our climate, and congenial in every way to all our conditions. It is in introducing these, in making these known that our experimental farms would be so beneficial. In no other way that I can see would so much national good be done at so little cost. Methinks that in this direction even the most bigoted protectionist, and the most utilitarian free-trader might work hand in hand.

Another feature of New Zealand rural life which struck me was the frequency of villages—the nearness of neighbours—in a word, settlement in communities, as contrasted with the isolated, detached way in which habitations are found set down at wide, weary intervals, in most of the country districts of New South Wales. Indeed, village life, such as we know it in the old country, or as it is found in many parts of New Zealand, is scarcely known in our older colony. The evils of indiscriminate, unrestricted selection—the Ishmaelitish, nomadic proclivities of the roving land-grabber of the old *régime* are, alas ! “twice-told tales” in New South Wales ;

but in New Zealand, especially in Otago, a more human and humane system had evidently been followed from the first. As a consequence, farms and fields were neatly fenced and divided. Village churches were numerous ; common centres round which clustered the neat homes of village tradesmen and traders. Farm-houses were trim and neat, and adorned with gardens and orchards much more than is common in Australia. Waste places were fewer, roads were more numerous and better kept, and, in fact, rural settlement was more forward ; and notwithstanding a widespread depression commercially, consequent on continued bad seasons and low prices for produce, the people looked healthy, happy, and contented, and I saw nothing to indicate any absence of the material comforts, and even the common luxuries of life.

For many years I have advocated that a trial should be given in Australia to oil crops. Some time ago I contributed articles to various journals on the subject, and made special reference to it in my last published volume,² and it was gratifying to find instances during my tour that proved my ideas were not chimerical. I found, for example, a few progressive farmers turning their attention to linseed as a crop. I have on record the results of several of these trials. I find that even with a yield of half the number of bushels of linseed to the acre as compared with wheat, the oil seed crop

² "Our Australian Cousins." London: Macmillans, 1880.

pays better than the cereal. An average price of 5s. 6d. per bushel is procurable in Dunedin all the year round for linseed, and I am convinced that rape seed, mustard seed, sesamum, gingelly, castor and other such crops would be more suitable to our climate and pay our farmers better.

Much might be written on this subject, but the space at my disposal is limited. New Zealand is so bountifully endowed with that merciful gift of heaven—water—that she has an undeniable superiority over us in this drought-infested colony of New South Wales; but this is only another argument to strengthen my contention that we do not utilize our gifts to the full as we might.

Water conservation might well go hand in hand with the experimental work of an agricultural department. As an instance of what private enterprise can accomplish, I may mention that in the far west now, I am privileged to be a co-worker with a public-spirited and wealthy land owner, and on rich soil, such as we have for countless leagues on our great western plains, he is now irrigating and preparing land for sowing with tropical crops, and the result may be the introduction of several new and remunerative industries.

With irrigation, a plentiful supply of agricultural labour, intelligent experiment and collation of facts and dissemination of information under a well-organized and active agricultural department, a liberal land system, which will seek to minimize harassing restrictions and exactions, and give

fixity of tenure with compensation for all improvements by which the value of the land would be permanently enhanced, such as dams, tanks, wells, &c.—the lot of the farmer in New South Wales might be enormously advantaged, and it is in this direction that the friends of the farmer must work, and the hare-brained twaddle we hear about a protective policy for the farmer, which would tax him heavily on every implement of husbandry for the benefit of an insignificant section of weak-kneed manufacturers, which would seek to force him into a continuance of his present unequal fight with Nature, in which he vainly tries to grow products for which his soil and climate are not so well adapted as those of his competitors in more favoured neighbourhoods, and which, in a word, seeks to sap his energies, rouse his worst passions, inflame his discontent, and make him less self-reliant and enterprising, instead of encouraging him to patient investigation and intelligent experiment. All this irresponsible chatter, I repeat, by impracticable theorists and hobbyists, all the protection conventions, vain-glorious challenges to public debate, and organized stumping of the country by fluent farmers' friends, who perhaps don't know the difference between a plough and a pickaxe, would not do one tithe the good that one experimental farm would do. In fact, by distracting men's attention from practical measures, and raising clouds of dust on theoretical issues for purely personal political ends, these self-dubbed saviours of the farming interest do irremediable harm.

CHAPTER XX.

Good-bye to the bluff—A rough passage—Tasmania in the distance—Coast scenery—A nautical race—Ocean fisheries—Neglected industries—Fish-curing—Too much reliance on State aid—The view on the Derwent—Hobart from the sea—An old-world town—"No spurt about the place"—Old-fashioned inns—Out into the country—A Tasmanian squire—The great fruit industry—A famous orchard—Young Tasmanians—The hop industry—Australian investments—The Flinders Islands—A *terra incognita*—Back to Melbourne.

THE icy breath of the South Antarctic was causing finger-tips to tingle as we steamed away from Invercargill in the good ship *Wairarapa*, and left the shores of Maoriland to fade away in the blue haze of distance. What a feast of picturesque grandeur and beauty had we not stored up in memory! What visions of the wondrous glory of the Almighty's creative skill did we not recall as we pondered over the incidents of our all too short summer holiday! And yet we had not half exhausted the marvels of this land of wonders. The weird solemnity of Lake Taupo, with its volcanic eruptions and abysmal activities; the awful majesty and rugged grandeur of the Alpine gorges and passes; the labyrinthine intricacies and astounding sinuosities of the West Coast Sounds, with their startling contrasts of bluff and craggy

peak, dashing cascade, and calm azure depths of unfathomable sea, heaving gently at the foot of beetling cliffs—the perils of mountain ascent, over glittering glacier and tumbled moraines—the blushing vintage and orchard bounty of the far north—the billowy prairies of rustling grain in the more robust south ;—all these we might have witnessed, had time been at our disposal ; but all these, and marvels many times multiplied, may be seen by any one possessed of leisure and means, who may, after reading these notes of mine, feel the impulse born within him to follow our example, and pay a visit to this glorious country. I once read a book on the marvels of India entitled, “Wanderings of a Pilgrim in Search of the Picturesque.” There be many pilgrims now-a-days after the same quest ; but India and all the magnificence and colouring of Oriental pomp and luxury—all the barbaric splendour of “the land of the peacock’s throne”—cannot, I think, compare with the majestic prodigality, the lavish adornment with which Nature has so generously and richly attired the mountains, plains, lakes, forests, and coasts of New Zealand. For variety of natural scenery I do not think any country on our planet can vie with it. Little wonder, then, that any one having a soul in harmony with the beautiful in Nature, ever so little, and gifted, if even but sparingly, with the faculty of expression, should revel in description of these wonders. As a countryman of Burns and Scott, I confess I could not resist the impulse, and if I have given any of my readers only a tithe of the

pleasure by my descriptions that the actual witnessing of the scenery itself has given me, then I feel that I am repaid for all my scribe labour; and possibly, if I have been the means of exciting a desire to behold for one's self the wonders of Maoriland, I will reap a rich reward of kindly benediction by-and-by, I am sure, from travellers who may follow my footsteps, checking my accuracy and sharing in my delight.

We had a rough, nasty passage to Tasmania. The bounding billows of the South Pacific belie their name; and the peristaltic motion they impart to the diaphragm begets tendencies the very reverse of pacific. "The vasty deep" in these southern regions gets very much mixed and tumbled up, in the winter months, and the accompaniment to the cheerful whistling of the merry winds in the rigging, was a series of groanings almost too deep for utterance in the cabins below. We were glad when the bold coast of Tasmania hove in sight. Cape Pillar was the first promontory to greet us. Certes, how the icy blasts shrilly piped their roundelay. The spray from the cut-water hissed past us as we stood on the poop, and made the skin tingle, as from the lash of a whip. As we got abreast of Port Arthur, the scene of horrors and cruelties and iniquities of demoniac intensity in the old convict times, the elements quieted down somewhat, and we were able to enjoy the varied panorama that rapidly unfolded itself before us as we sped swiftly along.

Dense forests clothe the country from the far-off inland hills down to the cliffs that guard the

coast. At Cape Raoul the basaltic columnar formation of the coast is very strikingly displayed. The cliffs jut out in serried series of mighty pillars, just like the perpendicular pipes of a great natural organ. The blast wails and shrieks amid the nooks and crannies, and anon sobs with a gurdy undertone of lamentation as it whistles past. All the cliffs in shadow are white with hoar frost, and their minute icicles glitter like diamonds, while the sunny portions, wetted with spray, gleam with a sheen which is positively dazzling.

Now Storm Bay opens out before us. As if to sustain its reputation, the icy blast comes swirling round the snowy summit of Mount Wellington with augmented force, and chills us to the marrow. We were informed that snow on Mount Wellington is abnormal. Anyway the night-cap was on when we were there, and the weather was bitterly cold. Now we catch the gleam of a white lighthouse on a small island right ahead. Lovely bays open out on the right. The long, glistening estuary of the Derwent, studded with the bleached sails of numerous yacht-like craft. The long blue indistinctness of the river line of the Huon, with here and there a sail relieving the uniformity of tint. The swelling forest-clad hills closing up the background, and now the homesteads and green fields here and there dotting the long acclivity in front, all made up a scene which for breadth, animation, brightness, prettiness, you would find it hard to beat anywhere. The knolls

at the mouth of the inner bay are quite park-like with their clumps of bosky wood. Round the various points, sailing close up in the wind, creep whole flotillas of fishing and trading ketches. Tasmanians are famed for their dashing seamanship. The broad estuary is thronged as if a regatta were being held. Some of the ketches lie very low in the water, and some heel over in regular racer fashion. Most of them have a deep centre-board. Ask the skipper where is his load-line. He will answer, "Up to the main hatch." They are manned by a hardy, adventurous race, who number among their ranks some of the very finest boat sailors in the world. What splendid herring fishers they would make! Yes, if we only had the herring!³

And yet around the Australian coasts what hauls might be made with proper appliances, and what a source of wealth have we not in the teeming millions of fish that haunt the shores, and breed among the islets and in every bay and estuary. Here is another of the neglected industries that might give employment to hundreds of our colonial youth. It needs no coddling by the State. It would flourish without the aid of fustian claptrap. It might exist without any custom-house

³ Since the above was penned, an effort has been made to acclimatize this well-known fish. A large consignment of herring ova was sent out to Melbourne, but unfortunately on being opened, the whole shipment was found to have gone bad. There is little doubt that the trial will again be made, and that the introduction of this valuable fish is only a matter of time.

interference. All that is wanted is energy, enterprise, a little daring, and hardihood, a little common-sense organization, and the machinery for disposing of the fish after they are caught. If some enterprising capitalist would only import a crew from Cornwall, or Montrose, or Buchan, or Lerwick, to show our Australian youngsters how they do it in the more treacherous and boisterous seas of the inclement north. I think the venture would pay a good dividend; and I am quite sure every well-disciplined and properly-balanced gastronomic mind would hail such an attempt to introduce a change from the eternal "chop, steak, and sausages," with a chorus of benediction.

In New Zealand, fish-curing is a thriving and lucrative calling. In every hotel delicious smoked fish form a never-failing adjunct to the breakfast table. Large quantities are exported and reach Victoria, and go to other parts. Why can we not do likewise in New South Wales? Again I ask—is it ignorance, or apathy, sloth, want of energy and enterprise, or what is it? Are we so mildewed and emasculated with the eternal molly-coddle of the Government pap boat, that we cannot launch out and start a new industry like this by private enterprise?

Has the dry rot of subsidy and bonus so wizened us up that all private initiation and independent effort is atrophied? Surely when natural channels of enterprise such as this exist, and are only waiting to be tried seriously and sensibly, to

succeed—nay, to brilliantly succeed—is it not folly—is it not sinful, for patriots with exuberant verbosity, to get up and demand that the State shall impose protective duties on this and that industry, thus hampering the free play of commercial activities, strangling all noble self-reliance, and crushing all independent spirit out of a people already deeply infected with the demoralizing doctrine that the State is to do everything, and that private pluck and enterprise are a mistake and a delusion.

Some time ago several Chinamen started fish-curing on one of the northern lakes in New South Wales, and at the time I knew the place, they were doing well and making a good thing out of it. But then there arose vicious and evil practices, such as the sinful slaughter of myriads of young fry—the use of illegal nets, the wholesale destruction of spawn by means of dynamite, &c., and I believe the fishing on that part of the coast was pretty well murdered. It is a saddening and a humiliating reflection that, with all our self-complacency and self-congratulations about our marvellous resources and wonderful natural wealth, we really do so mighty little practically to develop the one or utilize the other.

Possibly the hardest-working and most self-reliant class we have in the Australian community, it seems to me, are our miners or diggers and prospectors; and upon my word, our mining legislation generally, seems deliberately designed with the object of making things as hard for the

miner, and putting as many obstructions and impediments in his way, as possible.

But to hark back. Here I am off the track again, and pursuing my impetuous way from smoked fish to mining reserves, without ever a thought towards the patience of my readers !

One of the most prominent features that shows boldly out from the background of boscage as the visitor nears the narrows of the Derwent, from the open roadstead, is a gigantic shot tower, which must have been built in the very early days when the Hentys were pioneers over on the Victorian coast, and when the clanking irons of the chain gang must have been a constant sound in the infant settlement. Let the reader get that weird and awful record of the convict system, contained in Marcus Clark's novel, "His Natural Life," and he will then have an idea of what man's inhumanity to man is capable of. The old tower is not the only evidence of antiquity about the place, as we shall presently see. Meantime look at the chequered patterns on the hill-sides. Black ploughed fields alternate with the squares of green young crops, and these again with symmetrically arranged orchards and vineyards. Yes, this is the chosen home at the antipodes of the ruddy-cheeked and golden-haired Pomona. One can almost fancy there is a fruity fragrance floating on the breezes that sweep over the laden trees. Away to the left, the long gleaming water-way of the tortuous Huon, crowded with ketches, wanders in and out among the hills, which are here clothed from

base to summit with forests of blue and red gum, stringy bark, Tasmanian cedar, and other valuable timber trees.

Now as we glide onward, the homely old city opens out, backed by the steep bulk of Mount Wellington, whose tawny shoulders are now streaked with drifted snow. A fortress is here also in course of construction, though it seems, to my civilian eye, to be easily dominated by the heights at the back. Here lies Hobart at our feet, shining in the sun, and climbing, in errant and leisurely fashion, the easy slope which trends upwards from the water's edge.

A knoll projects out into the water in the middle of the city, and the houses cluster thickly round the two bays thus formed. The farther one is seemingly the busiest, as there are the wharves, warehouses, and populous streets. The warehouses are enormous. The roofs are lichened and grey with age. Alas! they are mostly empty. The old whaling days, and the days when large convoys sailed in from their six months' voyage, with Government stores and European goods have gone, never to return. The great barracks and long dormitories are silent and deserted now. The big stone buildings, built with a solidity which is all unknown to the contractors of this shoddy age, have a forlorn and desolate look, and there is an unmistakable air of decayed gentility and departed grandeur about the place which is somewhat depressing. Away on the left, at the head of the little bay, a multitude of gleaming white

tombstones marks the site of the city of the dead. These look like the great white bones of stranded whales bleaching and glistening in the sun. To the extreme right a fine stately mass of warm-tinted buildings flanks the city, and affords a charming relief to the eye, as it crowns the low eminence on which it is set. This is Government House, and round about it, encompassing it with a band of silver, steals the gently flowing Derwent, winding past a broken chain of wooded bluffs, which terminate the vista in a confused mist of leafy luxuriance.

We are now nearing the massive wharf. There is timber enough in the structure to make a dozen of our modern wharves. What an old-world look the place has! Many of the houses are built of red bricks, the roofs are brown with lichen, and wrinkled with old age. And yet there is an absence of life and a want of energy and bustle. Lots of badly-dressed young hoodlums loll about, leaning against the great stacks of shingles (Hobart palings) which are piled up in vast quantities ready for export. Of these are the fruit-cases made, which take away the wealth of the orchards, for which the island is famous—groups of young girls saunter about arm-in-arm; queer old *habitués*, clad in quaint garments of antique cut, hobble about and exchange nautical observations with each other. Several dismantled whalers lie at their moorings, and the huge warehouses hem in the scene—silent, deserted, empty.

“There ain’t no spurt about the place!”

ejaculates an observant Yankee fellow-passenger ; and he aptly enough expressed the sensation it gives one who witnesses the whole scene for the first time.

Time seems to be measured by Oriental standards here. All work is done in a leisurely fashion. An old horse is discharging cargo by means of a whim, instead of a steam crane, from a Dutch-looking lugger. Piles of hop bales litter the landing-place, and it would seem almost as if their hypnotic influence had cast a sleepy spell over the whole environment. The very steeples on the old grey churches in the city seem to nod in the gathering haze, and the smoke from the chimneys curls aloft in a somewhat aimless fashion, as if the fires below were all only half alight. An enthusiastic Victorian cannot refrain from commenting on this general attitude of sleepiness.

"Humph," says he ; "there's the effects of free trade for ye—not a blessed factory or a steam engine in the whole place !"

A little boy with a wan, pinched face, and the shabby-genteel look which patched and darned but scrupulously clean clothes gives to the wearer, now accosts us. "Board and residence, sir ?" he pipes in a squeaky treble. Poor little fellow, doubtless a sad tale he could tell. And so my gentle little travelling companion with a woman's quick imagination, begins to weave a romance of misfortune and penury, in which the little tout figures as the heir of a noble but decayed family. The mother, a fragile uncomplaining martyr, faith-

ful to the shattered fortunes of a gallant husband, and so on and so on! All this was poured into my ears as we sped along, and it was with much difficulty I restrained the tender-hearted little dame from trotting back to verify her romance from the poor boy himself.

In the summer season most of the houses are let to visitors from Sydney and Melbourne, and there are certainly large numbers of decayed gentlewomen and retired officers on half-pay, and such like, who eke out their slender incomes in this fashion.

Here is another evidence of the antiquity of the place. The names of the curious old inns—they transport one back to dear Old England at once. Here is The Queen's Head, The Bell and Dragon, The Eagle Hawk, the Maypole Inn, and so on through all the old familiar nomenclature. The gable ends elbow their way into the streets; the bow windows project over the pavements; the mossy roofs, with quaint dormer windows half hidden by trailing creepers, the stone horse troughs and mounting steps, the dovecotes and outside stone stairs to the stables, the old stone walls bulging out in places and tottering to their fall, all speak of "merrie England;" and one can scarce fancy that these dull dead masses on the distant hills are gum-trees, and that this is part of Australasia.

We quickly hire an open landau and are driven by a rosy-faced young Jehu into the open country. The suburbs are very pretty. We pass beautifully-

kept gardens, rich lawns, handsome stone houses. Ever and anon one of these quaint old inns. Churches are plentiful. Some have square towers, and are covered with red tiles, which give a warm touch of colour to the landscape. We pass the old orphan schools, now used as an invalid station. Yonder is a pottery—there a bone mill. Here the show and cricket grounds. On all hands grand orchards of great extent, trim rows of cottages, country houses standing back amid great plantations of symmetrically planted fruit-trees. On the right the Elwick racecourse, with its grand stand of red brick, and the Launceston railway, running close by ; and now in front, the silvery Derwent opens out like a lake ; and as we gaze across Glenorchy, with its hop kilns and tannery, and the pretty village of Bryant's Bridge sheltered by high wooded ranges, and nestling cosily round the old square-towered rustic church, we feel the whole charm of the place stealing upon us, and no longer wonder at the fair daughters of Tasmania so loyally maintaining the supremacy of their little island for natural beauty against all rivals.

Having heard so much of the fruit-growing industry of Tasmania, I was anxious to see an orchard for myself. Fortunately, we shared common interests with one of the fine old pioneers of the island, a grand old English gentleman, with cheeks as rosy as his own apples, and a heart as sound and ripe as the sweetest and best of them, though his hair was now whitening, like the almond blossom before the door of his hospitable mansion.

Turning up a lane, between sweet-smelling hedges and goodly rows of chestnuts, with a great expanse of pleasant fruit-trees on either hand, we accordingly drove up to the old manor-house, and politely inquired for the proprietor. Our advent had already been observed, and out came the old squire himself to receive us ; and no sooner did we make ourselves known to him, than the hearty English welcome we received made us more than ever doubtful that we were not the sport of some beneficent fairy, and that we were not really back in the old country after all.

The manor-house, with its many buildings, was the very picture of an old English homestead. The spacious courtyard, green with grass, surrounded by the stables, barns, and outhouses ; the running brook close by, wimpling merrily over its pebbly bed ; and all around, the trim avenues of neatly pruned fruit-trees and bushes, with the big black bulk of the wooded mountain in the rear, —composed such a picture of rural happiness and contentment as is rarely seen out of “Merrie England.” Then the smell of apples about the place. Apples by the ton in the long low lofts and cool spacious granaries ; apples and almonds of the choicer sorts in the verandahs and in sweetly-scented rooms. In the orchard a lovely pond, green with mosses, lustrous with the sheen of sun and water, and fringed with loveliest ferns, was well stocked with fish, which are here acclimatized, and from which the streamlets are being stocked. From the spacious verandah we look

right across the fertile valley to "Rest Down," the earliest settlement in the island, so called because the first people "rested down" here in old Governor Collins's time. Then the broad sweep of the river intervenes, and fifty miles off, the great dividing range of the Table Mountain closes in the scene. The remains of the first chimney built on Tasmanian soil was visible at Rest Down up to twenty years ago.

This particular orchard comprises forty-five acres. Last year the owner sold 2000 bushels of gooseberries, 3000 bushels of currants, and other fruits, including apples. In two years he raised fifty tons of strawberries on the estate. For the last twelve years the average return per acre has been over 60*l*. I saw two and a half acres of gooseberry bushes, from which 500 bushels of fruit are picked every year, and which are sold at 4*s*. 6*d*. per bushel. This beats wheat hollow. On the other side of the estate I was shown over ten acres of fine black soil, beautifully worked, and kept as clean as a Behar indigo field. During the ninth year of its cultivation this small patch yielded 1000 bushels gooseberries and 2000 bushels apples, for which the ruling prices are 4*s*. 6*d*. to 5*s*. per bushel. And yet if one talks to the ordinary run of Australian farmers about new products, about fruit-growing, tomatoes, vines, oil crops, anything out of the eternal old grind of wheat, and other usual cereals, he is laughed at, sneered at, jeered at, and stigmatized as visionary, conceited, and goodness only knows what else.

Black currant bushes were shown me here, which yield two, and even three bushels per plant, and the fruit is sold readily at 11s. per bushel. To show the energy and practical management of my host, he showed me where he had walled up a flood-water creek, which used formerly to run riot through the orchard, and the land so reclaimed was being levelled and planted with young trees. He had cut down bush trees and saplings, and made a corduroy road of these, on which he was carting his soil, stones, and material for the work of reclamation. As the garden grew at the far end, the corduroy road was taken up and the wood used for fuel, and the very road was being dug up and made eligible for the reception of more young trees. Nothing is wasted under his able management. Manure is liberally applied, and the inevitable result was everywhere apparent in bounteous returns and substantial plenty.

Along the roads were belts of walnut-trees, and several magnificent almond-trees were pointed out to me, of the fruit of which I partook, and found the almonds simply delicious. And yet such is the prejudice or apathy of the general public, that, my host informed me, his almonds were a drug in the market. Actually 70% were paid through the custom-house during the last six months for imported almonds, while the home-grown article, infinitely superior in quality, was absolutely unsaleable.

You see, protection through the custom-house is not the infallible recipe for "every ill that flesh

is heir to" that some "doctrinaire's" would have us suppose.

My old entertainer had very decided opinions about the causes of the prevailing depression and stagnation in the island. When I deplored the lack of energy which I noticed :—

"Bah," said he, "there's plenty energy, but it's misdirected, sir! Our young people will dance at a ball till two or three in the morning, and play lawn tennis all day to boot; but they are too ill and languid to get up to breakfast, and would let their own mother wait on them in bed. They will go to a picnic right up to the top of Mount Wellington; but they are too weak to go two miles to church unless they go in a carriage. Our young people are too well off, sir. Their parents made money in the old times, and the young ones had no inducement to work, when assigned prisoners could be got for 10*l.* a year. So our young men grew up with no settled industry, no application, and the country feels the curse of indolence and want of enterprise now."

Such was the dictum of my old friend. I make no comment on it. The moral is obvious.

My friend was enthusiastic in his advocacy of orchard farming as against cereals. All his young trees are now on blight-proof stocks. He has uprooted all his hedges and cultivates right up to his boundary walls, and even trains trees against them. He pointed out the property of a neighbour thirty-four acres in extent, which a few years ago was purchased for 300*l.* cash. During the first three

years the buyer got half his money back, and in two years they took over fifty tons of strawberries from fifteen acres.

"Where is the cereal that can equal that?" triumphantly queried my host. Certes! Echo answers, "Where indeed?"

Another product for which the island has become famous is its hops. Since its first introduction in 1822 by Mr. W. Shoobridge, the industry struggled on through many fluctuations, and in 1867 numbers of new growers erected kilns for curing the hops at various places, and hop-growing became fairly settled as one of the leading industries in the New Norfolk district. The low prices in 1869—70 checked for a time the progress of the industries, but now it seems fairly established, and as time goes on, adding to the experience of the growers, and their ability to turn out a good article, there seems every reason to predict a great future for Tasmania as a hop-growing country. The leading kinds at present grown are the early white grape, goldings (Canterbury), and late or green grape, and also a very early kind called the red golding.

In 1879 the Agricultural returns give the following statistics: 587 acres; produce, 738,616 lbs.; value of hops exported, 26,512*l.*; weight, 558,622 lbs.

After a very pleasant day among the orchards we rejoined the steamer, and sailed for Melbourne during the night.

Next morning we had a beautiful view of the picturesque coast of the goodly little

island. Between Hobart and Swan Island we passed no less than three localities where coal exists. Mines have, in all three places, been opened and since abandoned. There is no doubt that in minerals Tasmania is very rich. Like all the Australian colonies, she only wants capital, and more abundant labour, to become the theatre of busy and remunerative industries. The quid-nuncs of the London Stock Exchange smile and shrug their shoulders at the mention of Australian investments. For the gambling purposes of London jobbers, securities must be readily negotiable ; and Australian stocks and shares, though offering three, and even four times, the rate of interest obtainable on the floating media of Capel Court, are of course not readily negotiable or vendible, and so for the present they are neglected. The time will come, however, nay, is on the approach now, when capitalists and workers, both, will better understand and more intelligently appreciate the boundless resources of Australasia, and a new era of enterprise and development will undoubtedly set in, which will advance the cause of true Anglo-Saxon federation more than all the fussy claptrap of irresponsible theorists, who speak so much and really do so little.

As an illustration of how really little is known of Australia, even by those who might be imagined to know most ; the captain, as we were talking on this theme, pointed out to me the Flinders Island which we pass between Hobart and Melbourne. This group contains more land than all Samoa,

about which so much fuss is being made at present, and which has almost led to a grave imbroglio between some of the European great powers. The Flinders are by all reports rich in mineral wealth, and yet they are practically ignored, and their very existence unknown to the great majority even of Victorians, who are so enthusiastic (and I for one do not blame them,) about the conquest of South Sea Islands, the annexation of New Guinea, and the opening up of new markets for Victorian manufactures. The islands contain a population of some sixty individuals, mostly half-castes, the result of the intermarriage of runaway sailors with Tasmanian aborigines. Sheep and cattle are reared by these islanders, but no attention is paid to growing either wool or beef on a commercial scale. They make a living which suffices for all their simple wants out of their flocks and herds, and their diet is eked out with the eggs and oil of the mutton bird, both of which they also export.

The bird itself, after the oil is expressed, is smoked, and forms one more antipodean paradox. It is familiarly known as the Australian smoked herring, and yet it is a bird. A toasted smoked mutton bird, both in smell, taste, and colour, is scarcely distinguishable from a smoked bloater. They are said to be very nourishing, and invalids find them toothsome and appetizing.

Maria Island, one of the group, has been leased to an Italian for the purpose of trying to introduce silk culture.

Amid a succession of icy squalls we reached Hobson's Bay, threaded our devious way up the unsavoury Yarra, and were pleased once more to take up our quarters in that most homely and comfortable of caravanserais, Menzie's Hotel, and so for the present we bid a reluctant adieu to our New Zealand cousins.

CHAPTER XXI.

Summary—Importance of the colonies sometimes overlooked at home—Their commercial importance—Fields for capital—Mineral wealth—Farm products—New industries—Field for farmers—Liberal land regulations—Openings for artisans—For labourers—Free institutions—A land of promise for willing workers—Inducements for seekers after health and lovers of the picturesque—The clouds clearing—Returning prosperity—The peace and unity of the Empire.

BRIEF as had been our sojourn among "our New Zealand cousins," and rapid as had been our journeying through the islands, it will be evident, I think, from what I have recorded in the foregoing chapters, that enormous progress has been made during the last twenty years in all that tends to build up sound national life. The history of New Zealand in its connection with the mother country is, in fact, the history of all the Australian colonies. Too often has their importance been but grudgingly recognized, where it has not in some instances been overlooked altogether by the leaders of thought and political life at home. Of late years, thanks to such true Britons as Professor Seeley and others, ample amends have been made for this whilom neglect. The tendency now is all the other way. With the multiplication and development of im-

proved means of communication, the pulsations of colonial life are more quickly and keenly felt at the heart of the empire. Their political importance is no longer ignored ; but it is open to some doubt if their commercial importance is as yet adequately recognized. What fields are there not here open for the employment of British capital in exploiting our mineral wealth alone. We hear of millions being sunk in Southern India, Spain, and elsewhere, yet I know myself of gold, silver, copper, tin, antimony, bismuth, coal, slate, marble, lead and other deposits in dozens of localities in Australia and New Zealand, all of which would give certain and ample returns to judicious investment. In silver alone, of late years, the application of improved methods has at one jump lifted Australia into the foremost ranks of silver-producing countries. If English capitalists would utilize the services of competent scientific mining engineers, metallurgists and mineralogists ; if they would assist their colonial cousins with part of their wealth, to properly prospect the country, there might be such a "boom" in mining, as would draw more closely than ever the heart and circumference of the Empire together, and forge fresh bands of solid substantial profits, mutual inter-dependence, and community of material interests between all portions of our race which would quickly result in a very real tangible federation indeed. But not only in minerals do these colonies offer inducements to the capitalist at home. Hundreds of promising industries are retarded for want of the necessary capital. Oil

mills, for example, would be an instant success, if the farmer were only assured of a steady market close at hand for his oil crops. Tobacco-growing would increase a hundredfold and would become a lucrative investment, if capital were judiciously expended in putting up the necessary appliances for manufacturing the leaf. Butter, cheese, and bacon factories are even now increasing, but are capable of indefinite multiplication. In the manufacture of essences and essential oils, there are splendid openings for investment, and indeed there is scarcely a product of nature used in the arts or sciences that could not be profitably grown and manufactured in these colonies were but the right men imbued with the desire to try them. As a rule the colonial farmer is a poor man. Clearing is expensive ; wages, fortunately for the labouring classes, are high ; and the facilities for securing land have hitherto been great, so that most settlers have been tempted into purchasing more land than they could profitably work, with such resources as have been at their command. Now, however, capital might be encouraged to bring the aids of combination, modern machinery, and skilled enterprise, to the aid of the farmer. In fruit-preserving alone, were the right methods adopted, there are fortunes lying ready to be made, beside which the profits of similar enterprises in old lands would seem petty and mean. As it is, all the available capital in the colonies is profitably invested, and any return under six per cent. is looked on as on the whole rather unsatisfactory.

In fisheries I have suggested boundless potentialities ; and indeed nature has been so lavish in her gifts of raw material, that if we could only fairly set moneyed men and men of inventive genius thinking, and induce them to throw in their lot amongst us, we could not fail to benefit by the accession, and they would never have cause to regret their advent.

To farmers with a little capital, who find too circumscribed a sphere for their energies in the old lands, the colonies present an inviting field. Land is yet plentiful and cheap. The returns for faithful tillage are bountiful and certain, and there is no end to the variety of products that may be grown. "Corn, and wine, and oil," is no figure of speech as applied to the products of these colonies, but a plain matter-of-fact statement. As regards New Zealand, for instance, the following statement illustrates the anxiety and determination of the Government to foster agriculture, and it should not be forgotten that roads and railways are constantly being constructed, and new markets being opened up.

"In order to test the sincerity of the outcry for land by professional political agitators, as well as to prevent the chronic appeals of the labouring classes to the Government through alleged lack of employment, the Minister of Lands has devised a new land scheme. The leading features of it are the setting apart of blocks of land as special settlements—in the first instance in Wellington province, but if successful, the scheme will be

extended to other provinces—to be occupied on perpetual leases for a first term of thirty years, and a second term of twenty-one, without any right of acquiring a freehold. Rental is to be based on the capital value of the land, the minimum price being two per cent. per acre, and the maximum area twenty acres to any applicant, who will get it without competition, as priority will be determined by lot. Among the essential conditions are residence, cultivation, and that the land shall not be subdivided or sublet. Government will contribute 20% towards building the settler's house, and, if land is bush, will give the average price to enable the selector to clear and sow the section in grass. The State will then charge on value of the land five per cent. per year, and on the sum advanced for the improvement the same rate. A start will be made in the middle of June of the present year (1886) to make the initial experiment at Parihaka, and the Government state the settlements will be located near towns or railways where labour is attainable, and where the land is suitable for small industries."

To active, intelligent artisans, and workers who have no capital but their own stout hearts and strong, willing limbs, these colonies present a field for their enterprise, such as is nowhere else existent at this time upon the earth. We have no room for the intemperate idler, the loafer, or incompetent, chicken-hearted, slovenly shirker. We have enow of these, God wot, already; but there is work out

here for every willing, capable, self-respecting man, under circumstances of such material comfort, such increased remuneration, such political freedom, such generous fare and charm of climate, with all the accessories and surroundings of community of speech, race, religion, and home institutions, as are nowhere else procurable in any dependency of the Empire. A little "roughing it" there is certain to be at first. Things will be a little strange to begin with. The streets of colonial cities are not paved with gold, and indeed the towns and cities are in any case not the best fields for the labourer in the colonies, but if a man is willing, adaptable, handy, cheerful, sober, and determined to get on, depend upon it he cannot fail of a success, which is all but impossible of achievement in the crowded and narrow sphere of the labourer's life at home.

To the seeker after health, these colonies offer the fountains of renewed youth. At all times of the year by judiciously changing the locality, you can live in perpetual summer, with an air as balmy and bracing, and perfectly enjoyable, as can fall to the lot of mortals here below.

To the lover of the picturesque, and the seeker after the pure delights that a communion with nature ever yields, I think my pages of description surely afford ample promise that a visit cannot possibly be fraught with disappointment.

The clouds of commercial depression are lifting. The native difficulty seems to be fairly and for ever settled. Politics, let us hope, are becoming purified. The long succession of deficits has at

length come to an end. Last year's estimates have shown a surplus of 37,000*l*. The coming year has an estimated revenue of over four millions, with an anticipated surplus of 42,000*l*. This is accompanied by a diminution of the property tax to the amount of 24,000*l*. The population is increasing satisfactorily. Public works of much importance, and of a reproductive character, are being vigorously prosecuted; and those already carried out, are year by year becoming increasingly reproductive. The feeling of friendly regard and brotherly affection for the dear old mother country seems only to become accentuated as time rolls on. The signs of returning and permanent prosperity are everywhere apparent. Intellectual and mental life is vigorous; religion and learning are advancing; and on all sides, the outlook is hopeful and the signs fortuitous. It is to be hoped indeed that our New Zealand cousins are entering upon a new era of peaceful progress and steady advancement in everything that will tend to build up true national greatness, and help to preserve the unity, the peace, and the dignity of that great Empire of which their southern island home is one of the most beautiful and most fruitful dependencies.

APPENDIX I.

NEW ZEALAND FORESTS.

PROFESSOR KIRK has prepared a voluminous report on the forests of the Colony and the state of the timber trade, which he has forwarded to the Minister of Lands. The report deals with each provincial district separately, but the forests of East Cape and the southern districts of the North Island have yet to be treated of. The following are portions of the report :—

THE SOUTHLAND TIMBER INDUSTRY.

In Southland there are still 312,467 acres of virgin forest out of 345,197 reserved by the Crown. It will thus be seen that the area already denuded by sawmillers is 32,730 acres. There are thirty-six sawmills in operation, employing about 700 men, the average weekly expenditure for wages being 1200*l.*, or about 65,000*l.* per annum; the total output being estimated at 24,000,000 superficial feet of inch thickness per annum. The Southland timber trade is certainly in a depressed state at this time, caused by over-production, though the rapid development of Southland trade has closed mills in Catlin River, annihilated the coastal timber export of Westland, and greatly restricted that of Marlborough and Nelson. The timber converted in Otago district does not amount to more than one-fourth of the annual output of Southland, so that Southland practically supplies the markets of the southern portion of the Colony from Invercargill to Ashburton with red and white pine, and exports cargoes to Queen Charlotte Sound, the Wairarapa, and the Manawatu. The quantity of timber shipped from Southland ports coastwise during the year ending 31st March, 1885, was 1,659,038 superficial feet; to foreign countries, 1,107,674 feet. There can be no doubt that the foreign trade is capable of considerable expansion. The total area of forest land granted for sawmill leases during the three years ending 30th September, 1885, is 5901 acres, so

that, including the mills working on private land, over 200 acres of forests are denuded yearly in Southland alone.

THE OTAGO FORESTS.

Otago has an area of 13,759,000 acres Crown lands, but the Professor thinks the area of really good forest will fall below 1,000,000 acres. From a return prepared by the Commissioner of Crown Lands for Otago, I find that eleven sawmills are in operation in the district, while two others are returned as not working. The total number of men employed is stated to be 101, and the annual output slightly exceeds 7,600,000 superficial feet. Although six mills are stated to be worked by engines of six-horse power only, the number of men may safely be increased to 160, and will then contrast poorly with 700 men and boys employed in the Southland sawmills. Licenses in Otago are granted for sections of 100 acres, at the rate of 1*l.* 1*s.* per acre, payable in three annual instalments. Licenses are granted to split and cut firewood, fencing, &c., on sections 200 feet square, on payment of 2*l.* 10*s.* per annum. The total receipts from both sources amount to rather more than 500*l.* per annum.

TIMBER INDUSTRY IN CANTERBURY.

The proportion of forest land in the Government district of Canterbury is less than in any other part of the Colony, large portions of the districts being absolutely divested of trees except where small plantations have been made by settlers. The district has an area of 8,693,000 acres, of which 374,350 acres are considered to be more or less clothed with forest, but as the chief forest areas are situated in mountainous country, the quantity of timber available for the purposes of sawmills is extremely small. No timber is being cut in State forests in Canterbury under license at the present time. The land is sold at 2*l.* per acre, including timber. Twenty-one sawmills are in operation, and the average output of each is less than 500,000 feet per annum, the total not exceeding 9,893,000 superficial feet.

WESTLAND.

The area of Westland is estimated at 3,045,000 acres, of which 1,897,558 acres are covered with splendid forest still in the hands of the Crown, in addition to 632,519 acres of lowland scrub or inferior forest. At the present time most of the mills are not working more than one-third time, and

some even less. The actual output at the present time scarcely exceeds three million superficial feet, while the number of men employed is 291, conversion being restricted to sufficient to meet local demands, the coastal trade having completely passed away. The freehold may be acquired in Westland for 1*l.* per acre, including the timber. Licenses to cut timber are granted for one year on payment of a fee of 5*l.*, or 10*s.* per month, but no definite limitations are made with regard to area. Practically, the licensee has liberty to cut wherever he pleases within the boundary described in this license, no supervision being attempted.

NELSON FOREST LANDS.

The area of the provincial district of Nelson is estimated at 7,000,000 acres, the forest lands still in the hands of the Crown comprising an area estimated approximately at 3,290,000 acres; but this quantity includes good mountain forest, scrub, and patches of timber in gullies, &c., so that it is extremely difficult to form an approximate estimate of the average of timber available for profitable conversion. In all probability it will not exceed 1,000,000 acres. Twenty-two sawmills are in operation in the district, and afford employment to 130 men and boys. The total output is stated at 5,360,000 superficial feet.

THE TIMBER INTERESTS OF MARLBOROUGH.

Marlborough has 2,560,000 acres, one-fifth of which is covered with forests of varying quality. Fourteen sawmills are in operation in the district, and afford employment to 175 men and boys. The annual output is estimated at 8,606,340 superficial feet. Sawmills were established in this district in the very early days, a large supply of good timber growing in situations of easy access, and the facilities for shipping coastwise have proved an irresistible inducement. It is therefore no great matter for surprise that most of the forests near the sea have been practically worked out.

THE AUCKLAND TIMBER INDUSTRY.

The provincial district of Auckland comprises 17,000,000 acres, and includes the most valuable forests in the Colony. The area covered by forest is estimated by the chief surveyor to contain 7,200,000 acres, of which about 1,606,350 acres—including the reserves—are still held by the Crown. A re-

markable feature of the forests of the Northern District is that while they possess timber-trees not found in any other part of the Colony, they comprise as well all the kinds found in the other provincial districts. The kauri is by far the most valuable timber-tree in the Colony. For good continuous kauri forest, 20,000 superficial feet per acre would be a rather low average, but much of the land classed as kauri forest may have only one or two trees per acre—equivalent, say, from 3000 to 5000 superficial feet.

The following approximate estimate has been prepared by Mr. S. P. Smith, chief surveyor :—Kauri forest in the hands of the Government, 36,470 acres; owned by Europeans, 58,200 acres; owned by natives, 43,800;—total, 138,470 acres. Mr. Smith states his belief that a considerable proportion of the kauri forest still in the hands of the natives is subject to rights of Europeans to cut timber therefrom, and adds : “In making up this estimate I exclude forests in which the timber, as far as my knowledge goes, is scattered and not likely to pay for working at present, and take only that which is fairly accessible.”

Referring to the timber industry of Auckland, Professor Kirk says that the return drawn up by the Registrar-General states the number of sawmills to be 43, of which eight are worked by water-power. The annual output is stated to be 48,631,206 superficial feet, and the number of persons employed 1443 men and 35 women. These are very much below the proper numbers. The total value of timber exported from Auckland is returned at 135,952/., or more than five times as much as all the rest of the Colony put together. The Auckland sawmills must be classed amongst the best in the world. The largest are considered to be unequalled in the southern hemisphere. In one or two cases employment is given to nearly 500 men and boys, and the annual output of each is stated to exceed 8,500,000 feet per annum. At the present time there are numerous mills with an output of 5,000,000 feet and upwards. One mill, with an annual output of 500,000 feet, is stated to have sufficient timber to last for over 30 years, but this is an exceptional case. With possibly two exceptions, all large mills have sufficient standing kauri to keep them going for the next 12 or 15 years, at least, at the present demand.

THE EXTINCTION OF THE KAURI.

Professor Kirk concludes his report, as follows :—“Estimating the total extent of available kauri forest at 200,000 acres, and placing the average yield at the high rate of 15,000 superficial feet per acre for all classes, the present demand

will exhaust the supply in 26 years, making no allowance for natural increase of local requirements. If, however, the demand expands in the same ratio that it has shown during the last 10 years, the consumption in 1895 will be upwards of 240,000,000 superficial feet per annum, and the kauri will be practically worked out within 15 years from the present date. Under these circumstances, the best interests of Auckland and the Colony at large demand the strict conservation of all available kauri forests. The progress and welfare of northern districts have been largely due to her magnificent forest resources, and their conservation will prove an important factor in the permanence of her prosperity. The utilization of the ordinary timbers should be encouraged, and it should be an axiom with the settlers not to use kauri when red or white pine can be made to answer the purpose. Any steps tending to postpone the period of exhaustion will be of the greatest benefit to Auckland, as they would allow a longer period for the growth of kauri timber to take place within the restricted limit in which replacement is possible. Should this warning be unheeded, a large displacement of labour will result, and the prosperity of the North will be greatly retarded.

APPENDIX II.



*Extracts from the Sydney Daily Press relating to
the recent eruption of Mount Tarawera.*

Sydney Morning Herald, Friday, June 11th, 1886.

AUCKLAND, Thursday.

INTELLIGENCE was received here early this morning from Rotorua, stating that a terrible volcanic disturbance had taken place at Mount Tarawera. The residents of Rotorua passed a fearful night. The earth had been in a continual state of quaking since midnight. At ten minutes past two this morning the first heavy shock of earthquake occurred. It was accompanied by a fearful subterranean roar, which caused the greatest alarm to the residents, who immediately ran out of their houses. A grand yet terrible sight met their gaze. Mount Tarawera, which is in close proximity to Rotomahana, suddenly became an active volcano, and from the summit of the mountain immense volumes of flame belched forth to a great height. Streams of lava ran down the sides of the mountain.

The eruption appears to have extended itself to several places southward.

Dense masses of ashes came pouring down in the neighbourhood of the settlement at Rotorua at 4 a.m., accompanied by a suffocating smell, which rose from the lower regions of the earth. An immense black cloud of ashes hung like a pall over the country for miles round, extending in a line from Taheka to Wairoa.

At 3 a.m., a terrific report aroused the sleeping inhabitants of Taupo. An immense glare of a pillar-shaped light was observed to the N.N.E., and a great black cloud hung over this pillar. It was concave on the underside and convex on the upper, whilst meteors shot out from

the cloud in every direction, shedding unearthly bluish lights all around. Loud reports, accompanied by very heavy shocks of earthquake, followed in quick succession. The earthquakes continued till 6 a.m., when daylight dimly appeared, but the clouds of ashes which hung over the country rendered the light almost invisible. The trembling inhabitants thought that the end of the world had come. Two hitherto extinct volcanoes, Ruawhia and Tarawera, threw an immense column of flame and smoke into the heavens. Molten lava and hot mud ran in all directions, while huge rocks and masses of fire went up and around everywhere.

June 12th, 1886.

Refugees from Wairoa describe the eruption of Okaro, one of the peaks of Mount Tarawera, as a magnificent, but terrible sight. It is estimated an area of country sixty miles in extent has been either under volcanic eruption, or affected by the upheavals. The scene at Wairoa is described by several eye-witnesses as being one of terrible grandeur, and equal to that represented in Martin's celebrated picture of the Last Day. Shocks of earthquake continued almost incessant for three hours, but after that the quakings somewhat subsided.

Latest intelligence from Rotorua states that at a quarter to eight to-night, Ruawaku, one of the craters of Mount Tarawera, was still belching forth a huge column of steam and smoke. The whole mountain is almost completely hidden from view by the dense clouds of smoke. One man, who caught a momentary glimpse of the mountain, says that it has been raised by from 200 to 300 feet. Lake Rotomahana has become less, and is now one mass of boiling water. Nobody has yet been able to penetrate as far as the famous Pink Terraces. It is a matter of dispute as to what state they are now in. An attempt will be made to examine the neighbourhood of the terraces to-morrow.

Sydney Daily Telegraph.

Tuesday, June 22nd, 1886.

June 12.—We left Tauranga at half-past six, the wind sharp and bracing and the ground covered with hoar frost and the pools with ice. All over the surface of the land, as far as the eye could reach, lay a coating of volcanic dust, which was stirred up into clouds by every puff of wind. As we ascended the hill towards Oropi bush this coating became thinner, diminishing from an even deposit of about a quarter of an inch to the bare covering of the ground. Vegetation everywhere is coated with this earthy matter, although it is not so deep as to prevent the cattle from obtaining food.

The atmosphere was perfectly clear and the sun unobscured. The few settlers spoken to on the road all referred to the alarm caused by the untoward event of the previous day, but it was generally taken for granted that the force of the eruption had expended itself. Its distance and the cause of the dustcloud being understood, there was no further uneasiness, except for the fate of those near the centre of the eruption. The coating of dust steadily diminished as we neared Ohinemutu itself. On emerging from the bush at the top of the hill overlooking Lake Rotorua, a magnificent and at the same time saddening spectacle was disclosed. A dense bank of steam of snowy whiteness extended for miles and rose above the range of hills on the shore of Rotorua, opposite Ohinemutu. This bank of vapour drifted slowly to the northward and merged into another dustcloud, which appeared to be created by the play of the wind upon the thick deposits of dust which covered the hills and forests in that direction. In the direction where Tarawera was known to be, the bank of steam was solid and unbroken for miles, and rose to a height of several thousand feet further to the right. Over the road leading to Kotomahana was another vast column; over that lake the setting sun lit up these cloudbanks with a flush of pink, covering with a glory the ramparts of desolation below. Taking within this view the whole line of hills from Taheke to Ohinemutu—that is to say, the whole of the north shore of Rotorua—everything wore the grey-drab tint of the volcanic *débris*. At Ohinemutu itself the steam-jets appeared rather less active than otherwise, although numbers of new springs have broken out and the water of Lake Rotorua has risen a foot.

At the Ngae the shower was heavier, the dust falling to a depth of nine inches. The stories of mud and stones being deposited to a depth of several feet at this place are thus disproved. The dust covered up all vegetation, leaving cattle absolutely without food; some have already died at the Ngae; others are being fed on hay. The block of land at Taheke, which was valued on Tuesday at 11s. an acre, is now declared almost worthless, owing to this thick deposit of dust. Beyond Taheke, in the direction of Tauranga, the lightning felled several trees, which produced bush fires, and falling timber has obstructed the coach-road. There was, fortunately, no loss of life in any of these directions.

The pretty little Tikitapu bush, such a favourite with tourists, is completely destroyed; the whole forest is covered with three feet of volcanic dust. Trees 170 feet high are lying flat, torn up by the convulsion and the high wind, and their roots, as they were torn from the earth, lying in many cases ten feet

high. All undergrowth is swept away or torn down with the weight of the *débris*, and not a leaf is to be seen, and the foliage of the big trees is destroyed. On reaching the Tikitapu Lake, we find that it is the "Blue Lake" no longer; the colour of the water is changed to a dirty brown. Following the road, the sidings are filled up with drift deposits to half the width of the road. Rising the hill we come in view of Rotokakihi. What was once the green lake is now dirty water, and the heaviness of the shower may be gauged by a ditch of two feet, and a bank four feet, the top of which only is visible.

The residents at Rotorua described the noises heard as similar to those experienced at Tauranga—rumblings and tremors—but nothing resembling the cannonading heard in Auckland. The latter noise probably arose from the discharges in the upper atmosphere, and was deadened to those nearer the scene by the rumblings and vibrations in the lower atmosphere.

At Ohinemutu, the first signs of disturbance were felt at one o'clock in the shape of rumbling noises, which were taken for earthquakes. These continued without intermission. On looking out, a dense black cloud was seen in the direction of Tarawera, but it appeared as if it was hanging over Ohinemutu itself. In this cloud occurred wonderful electric phenomena, like the most brilliant lightning, but terrible beyond description. Finally the whole population rushed from their houses, terror-stricken, and ran down the street, moved apparently by the impulse to get away from the black canopy which swelled as if it were about to seal up the history of the village and involve all its inhabitants in a common grave. Some declared that the Day of Judgment had come, and the feeling experienced was such as we may suppose would be felt by the inhabitants of the earth on that day. None of these to whom I have spoken wish to repeat the experience of that terrible night.

The discoveries made by the expedition to Rotomahana and its south sides enable us for the first time to construct a connected account of the eruption and the extent and character of its influence. As to the phenomena, as connected with the first outbreak, there is naturally some discrepancy in statements, owing to the excitement under which observations were made, but a careful comparison of the descriptions given by the most competent and careful observers, shows that the first outbreak undoubtedly began in the peak of Tarawera mountain, known as Ruawhia. Not improbably some shifting of the earth crust beneath the mountain or a change within it, producing the generation of

great heat, caused the prolonged earthquake and rumblings which were heard between one and two o'clock in the morning, forming the first of the series of phenomena which attended the eruption. Soon after two o'clock Ruawhia was observed to be in flames. Above it hung a canopy of black smoke, producing on the mountain the appearance of a large mushroom, and lightning played with such brilliancy around the peak that the glare from the volcanic fires was hardly distinguishable. There is no doubt, however, that the mountain did emit flames, attended with a belching forth of red-hot stones, which could be distinctly seen as they were ejected into the air and rolled down the mountain sides. This continued for about an hour before the vomiting of the great mud cloud out of Lake Rotomahana, which fell so disastrously on the village of Wairoa. This cloud was observed by those watching the eruption of Tarawera to come up some miles south of the great mountain, and its apparent location gave rise to the belief, now proved erroneous, that Mount Kakaramea and the adjacent Lake Okara were in eruption.

The loss from the destruction of the terraces, as we cannot but fear they are gone, is simply incalculable. A marvel which was without parallel on the earth has been swept away; and even if ever replaced by the same agencies working in the silicious strata, and this is improbable, a long geological period would be necessary for their reproduction. The eruptions now in progress are attended by frequent earthquakes. Three were felt while we were in camp and two during the four hours spent on the dusthills around Rotomahana. One was of such violence that the swaying of the hill we were standing on was visible to the eye. If these craters keep in action they will form as great an attraction to tourists as the terraces, but when an escape has been found for the forces recently set into motion, they may subside into quiescence or become intermittent. The Rotorua district, however, must always be a very wonderful one, which tourists through New Zealand will never willingly leave out of their routes. As an attraction now, the district offers novelties which surpass everything here before. It furnishes the extraordinary example of how geological changes in the earth's strata are sometimes effected in the course of a few hours. The half-buried houses and whares at Wairoa are perfectly unique, and the village ought to be left standing just as it is, except so far as excavations are necessary to recover bodies or property. Rotomahana, as an exhibition of nature's forces, is infinitely more marvellous than ever it was before. To see this large basin torn and

lashed with a fury that baffles description—roaring, cannonading, screeching, driving into the air at one spot columns of steam such as might be generated in the boilers of a leviathan steamship, and from another orifice in the same crater send out black volumes of smoke and showers of stones, is a spectacle that can only lose in magnificence by any attempt to convey an expression of it in words. I feel that I dare not attempt to do it justice. Fortunately, from the configuration of the ground a full view may be obtained of a most extensive area of country.

With regard to the volcanic eruption, Dr. Hector believes that the earthquake shocks caused by the outbreak of Tarawera mountain, ruptured the steam-pipes in the Rotomahana geysers and let in the water of the lake upon the subterranean heat, resulting in the generation of enormous quantities of steam and the ejection of the mud at the bottom of the lake. He doubts, however, whether the eruption has been of a character which produces the formation of lava. He thinks rather that the outburst on Tarawera was caused by the rupture of the sealed cap which was previously impervious to steam. The stones resembling scoria were, he thinks, formed by heat produced in steam and not through liquefaction of the rock by intense heat. From a number of specimens I had collected on the scoria hills at the back of Rotomahana, he selected one which, from its characteristics, gave indications of lava. The rest were mostly pieces of terrace formation and a small piece of obsidian. As to the chance of a further eruption, Dr. Hector hesitates to pronounce any decided opinion. He believes, however, that the chief danger at present is from the mud. He says the danger from the shifting of recent deposits is well recognized.

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